A. M. D. G.

The Spiritual Exercises

OF

ST. IGNATIUS.

MEDITATIONS FOR AN EIGHT DAYS' RETREAT

BY

ALBANY JAMES CHRISTIE, S.J.

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PREFACE.

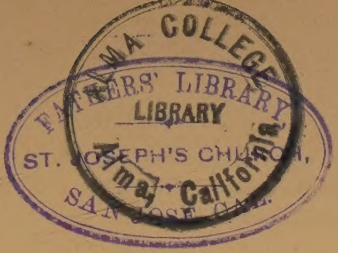
I MAKE a Retreat, in order to conquer myself and to set my life in order. In it, I occupy myself with the thoughts of God's Love to me,—of my want of correspondence with His Goodness,—with sorrow for the past and good resolutions for the future.

My remembrance of the past brings to mind the many occasions on which I have provoked the anger of my God, and if there is anything which can overcome my indifference, it will be (1) to consider God's patience in bearing with me over and over again, while others have, and with justice, been cut off after the commission of but one deliberate act of rebellion; and (2) to contemplate my Saviour, Jesus Christ, upon the Cross. If my heart refuses to be melted into contrition by the consideration of God's Love and

Charity, the terrible punishment which His Justice must require and which He, in mercy, unveils to me, must scare me away from sin.

And now, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?

Thou biddest me follow Thee; and Thou takest on Thee our human nature that I may contemplate Thy example. Pride, in refusing to submit my will to Thine, was my bane: Humility, for Thou art "Meek and Humble of Heart," shall take the place of pride, and, for as much as Humiliations are the only road to Humility, I will seek them or, at least, welcome them: and in proportion to my share in Thy Humiliations and my likeness to Thee, Thou will admit me to Thy Reward,—to the Kingdom of Thy Love,—the happiness which I had forfeited and which Thy Goodness enables me to regain.



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FIRST DAY.—I.

PREPARATORY.

I have to conquer what is bad in me, and I will make the most of my retreat.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—The Spiritual Exercises are made with a view to conquer what is bad in a man.

2*nd Preamble.*—I place myself in the presence of God, wishing to know what I ought now to do.

3*rd Preamble.*—Enlighten, O my God, my mind, that I may know; and incline my will, that I may choose, all that Thou wouldst have me do.

1*st Point.*—Man must bring into order that which is out of order in him.

2*nd Point.*—The Spiritual Exercises are undertaken for this purpose.

3*rd Point.*—I must make the most of the Spiritual Exercises, which I am now going to begin.

1*st Point.*—I am more than a merely human being; I am a child of God. If I live merely as a human being, I do not live as I ought; and, however good the senses are that God has given me, and the reason that He has given me, if I am occupied solely with the objects which the senses and reason bring before me, my whole being is out of order, because I neglect the objects which are brought before me by faith, to which I ought to take heed as a child of God. Now there is in me a tendency to give myself to the things of sense and natural intellect, exclusively: this tendency is bad and out of order, and it must be brought into order, so that, as the senses ought to be subject to reason, both the senses and reason may be subject to faith. Things *present* tend to make us forget things future; this is wrong and out of order, for, since things future last for ever whereas things present pass quickly away, man ought not to be the slave of things present, but have regard chiefly to things future and everlasting; and so, all will be brought into proper order. Things visible, things *sensible*, tend to put out of mind things invisible; and this tendency is out of order, for things invisible, those which are revealed by faith, are unspeakably more momentous than the objects of the senses or than mere natural truths for which the senses supply the materials: consequently, man must not be taken up with merely natural things, but have regard to the Invisible Trinity, the holy Angels, the life of grace—that order may be established. Thus, then, we must conquer what is bad in us, *i.e.*, all that is merely

earthly and sensual—all that is self-confident and would be independent of faith.

2nd Point.—There cannot be a better time for convincing ourselves of the truth of this—*that we must conquer what is bad in us*—than the time we spend in the Spiritual Exercises. In them, too, we not only study this truth, but we practise it. For eight days we exercise that self-control which we ought to exercise all our life long. The harmful influence of exterior things, of the world and of the senses, is diminished, and we exercise ourselves in realizing the invisible things which faith reveals to us. When we go out of retreat there will be danger of decay. Exterior occupations—studies—amusements—the routine of daily life—intercourse with friends, with the world—while they ought to be influenced for good by the grace of the Retreat, gradually tend to counteract the effects of the Retreat. In the course of the year the clock, as it were, runs down: then comes the annual Retreat again. The traveller across the desert comes to one Oasis after another to refresh him on his way. As the Ship takes in water or the Steamboat coals, the Christian man resumes his strength in the Exercises. He makes a new start in the Exercises and gains ground; in the intervals from one Retreat to another, he slides back—not, let it be hoped, all the way, but part of the way, and so Retreat after Retreat helps us on. The Exercises, then, are the time for penetrating our souls with the greatness of things invisible and eternal; and the better this is done, the less chance of retrogression when they are over.

3rd Point.—I will make the most of *this* Retreat. It may be the last I shall ever make, therefore I will make the most of it. Not with excitement, but calmly and quietly keeping myself in God's presence and in the presence of my Angel Guardian—dwelling on things invisible, things of eternity—on their supreme importance. A hundred years hence I shall know their importance by experience: now I must live by faith: and faith must make up for the want of that *sight* of God and heavenly things which some day I shall possess. And, making the most of the Exercises, means, making the most of the meditations and contemplations—penetrating my mind with them—and allowing my will to be influenced by them and by God's Spirit, Who is always ready at hand to help me. I have to arm myself now against the seductions of the senses and the absorbing engagements of the world which will assail me when the Retreat is over: in proportion to the diligence with which I make myself feel invisible, eternal things during the Exercises, it will be easier to recall them amid the turmoil and distractions of the world. Therefore, I will make the most of these eight days, that God may bless the rest of the year.

Colloquy.—With Jesus Christ Who gives us the Exercises, asking Him to enable us, by the Holy Spirit, to use these eight days as He used His forty days' Retreat in the desert.

Our Father.

FIRST DAY.—II.

THE END OF MAN.

To save his soul.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—Man has been created that he may save his soul.

2*nd Preamble.*—On an eminence whence I may see the whole earth, I will look forth on the men and women who are on the face of it and think how they came there, and why?

3*rd Preamble.*—Enlighten, O Lord my God, my understanding, that I may understand why man has been created, and how I am concerned in it; and make me take it to heart.

1*st Point.*—"MAN." Let me take my stand where I can look out upon the world. There are kings and politicians—and men of science—and votaries of pleasure, and aspirants to honour: see them

living—energizing—toiling—from morning to night. See them being born—growing to maturity—declining—dying: what does all this mean? Why were they brought into being? They make their way in the world—accumulate a fortune—die, and leave behind them all they have acquired. Or, see them suffering—cripples from their birth—born blind—or deaf and dumb—pining away—poverty-stricken. Were they created to be wretched? Look at these men, pursuing science—look at their inventions—railroads and telegraphs for rapidity of transit and communication: or again, look at the fine arts, music, painting, &c.—look at their literature and systems of philosophy. Man leaves all these behind him. Are then these the objects of his being? Does he live and toil for that which ends in a few scores of years? Is he living merely to gratify his taste or his senses? to feed his ambition? and then end like the brute animal that at death perishes?

2nd Point.—"Man has been created." Therefore there is a Creator, and man is not alone. There is some One, besides man. And as this other Being created man, man belongs to Him. The men and women we are looking at, do not belong to themselves—are not independent; they depend on the Lord God Creator—on our Lord God, Whose handiwork they are. We, standing by the side of God, and looking out upon the world, see that they owe all they have to our God; that it was our God Who gave these men and women their limbs, their faculties, their bodies, their souls. Our God, therefore, cannot be put out of the reckoning when we

inquire what men and women exist for. Our God is the Artificer: these men are God's workmanship: and as the workman has an interest in his workmanship, so has our God in the work of His Hands. Our God has given man an immortal soul; this then must come into the reckoning, and it cannot be that our God will be satisfied with these men if they live as though they had no immortal souls:—if they live like the beasts that perish. It must be part of the work of these men—and indeed, considering its relative importance, the principal part, to secure the happiness of their immortal souls. This is the real end of the men who dwell on the face of the earth—to save their souls. Man has been created to save his soul. And as man is bound to save his soul as the end of his being, he is of necessity bound to use the means necessary to gain that end: and the means are, to praise, honour, and serve our God. Therefore let us pity those who forget their end, or fail to use the means: let us take the part of the Lord our God and urge on men the folly of living only for this world—the wisdom of saving their souls, and of living here on earth to the praise and honour and service of our God, that they may be happy for ever: nay, let us take the part of these poor deluded wretches themselves who forget our God and live like the beasts without reason, and rouse them up to feel the value of their souls and of salvation.

3rd Point.—And the Prophet Nathan said to David: "Thou art the man." To each one of us, our conscience says, Thou art the man. I, even I, have been created by God; and created with an

immortal soul capable of praising, honouring and serving Him: I am not my own: I belong to God and depend on Him for everything, and I owe Him all I have. And He expects me to save the soul He has given me and not let it perish: to prepare it to praise Him, honour Him, and serve Him in eternity, by praising, honouring and serving Him here. And if I live for Him here, I shall in the highest sense be living for myself; whereas, if I live for myself in sensuality or worldliness, I shall not live for God nor yet for myself, as it is written, "He that shall save his life shall lose it, but he that shall lose his life for My sake, shall save it."

Colloquy.—With the Blessed in Heaven, who were once as I am, and who by praising, honouring and serving their Heavenly Father on earth, have saved their souls.

Our Father.

FIRST DAY.—III.

MEANS TO ATTAIN THE END.

(1) *To praise God.*

We praise one who is absent, we show respect to one who is present, and whether absent or present we do the will of, *i.e.*, we serve, the person who has authority to command us. In an analogous way we praise, show respect to, and serve our Lord God, regarding Him, that is, as absent or present.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—"O Lord my Lord, how admirable is Thy Name throughout the world" (Psalm viii.). "Hallowed be Thy Name."

2*nd Preamble.*—Look out on the world, and see the men and women, created by God, and consider how they ought to praise Him.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord my God, that, in order to save my soul I may learn to praise Thee.

1*st Point.*—What is the meaning of praising another? It is, so to speak of him or so to act, (for often, actions may recommend another better than words), as to make others think better of him. The man who has learnt painting of another, does his master more credit by the excellence of his pictures than by any words of praise he could use. So, too, the workmanship itself of an artisan, wins praise for the artisan if it is well done. The clock that goes ill, is to the discredit, the dispraise of the clockmaker: if it go well, it is to his credit; and so it praises him. The building beautifully designed and erected is to the praise of the architect. So, when we look out on the face of the globe and see it full of men and women, created by God: if they are good and virtuous, they are to His credit; if not, they are to His discredit. He has created them and given them numerous blessings and, above all, the sure hope of everlasting life, unless they throw it away: what, then, does He expect of them? What is the condition of their coming to everlasting salvation? Why! that their lives be to the praise of Him Who made them: that they bring under subjection anything that might interfere with the due subjection of passion to reason,—that there be nothing out of order; that by exhibiting the likeness of God in themselves, they recommend God to those who see them; that they, as being God's portraits, be to His credit, *i.e.*, good portraits, and not to His discredit, *i.e.*, bad portraits. And do we not see that common sense would have it, that men and women should thus live and thus behave? Their own interest, to say nothing of their gratitude to

their Maker, should keep them from all inordinateness in themselves, and secure their goodness. And the Prophet Nathan said, "Thou art the man!" That same judgment which I pass on other men and women, is to be passed on me. And I am bound to live to the credit of my Maker; and I must do so, if I would save my soul and come to the end for which I was created.

2nd Point.—Consider how men may live to the discredit of God, by various examples. Israel was chosen to maintain the worship of the One true God: whenever Israel fell away into idolatry, they failed to praise God, and their apostasy was to His discredit. David was God's chosen one: when by that double mortal sin he fell away, he discredited his God, he caused the surrounding nations to blaspheme. Solomon brought praise to God before the Queen of Saba, but discredit, after his frightful polygamy and his adoration of his wives' false gods.

In more modern times, see how Christianity was hindered and the God of Christians discredited by bad Spaniards in South America, and by bad Portuguese in the East Indies: what discredit is brought on God and God's truth by the scandal of bad, unprincipled Catholics, and above all, of fallen and apostate religious or priests. The greater the gifts given by God, the more praise redounds to God if they are rightly used, the more discredit if unrightly.

3rd Point.—Consider how men live to the credit of God; for it is certain that others will judge o our religion and of the God of our religion, that is, of the true faith and the true God, by the behaviour

of us who profess that faith and are His children. The primitive Christians, of whom the Pagan remarked, "See how these Christians love one another," lived to the credit of God, and recommended to strangers their faith and their God, because their faith and their devotion to God, made them what they were. The martyrs whose conduct won their executioners' conversion: the saints who have lived and laboured for their fellow-men: the converted natives in the Reductions of Paraguay: St. Francis Xavier: the Sisters of Charity who nurse the wounded soldiers: the Catholic priests who have died as martyrs of charity while ministering to the sick—these are instances of praising God, not in word so much as in act. And such is the way in which the men and women created by God ought to praise Him: the way in which I ought to praise Him.

Colloquy.—O Divine Lord and Master, to Whom I owe every good gift I possess, and the everlasting life which is in prospect, and of which no created power can deprive me unless I myself wilfully forego it, teach me how to praise Thee, teach me to grieve for not having praised Thee more; make me the more resolved, by Thy help, to praise Thee now and as long as I live.

Our Father.

FIRST DAY.—IV.

MEANS TO ATTAIN THE END.

(2) *To show reverence to God.*

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—The Lord is very nigh thee: show Him respect (Philipp. iv. 5). "Thy kingdom come."

2*nd Preamble.*—Look out upon the world; on the men and women in it, and see how God is with them, all and each, actually Present, knowing their thoughts, words, actions.

3*rd Preamble.*—Enlighten, O Lord, my understanding to know Thy Presence, and my heart to reverence it.

1*st Point.*—God is Present to all men, to each and every one.

2*nd Point.*—God's Presence demands respect and reverence.

3*rd Point.*—God is Present to me.

1*st Point.*—God is Present to all the men and women on the face of the earth. Because He is not seen, the imagination is backward to apprehend what reason itself teaches. Imagination hinders the effect of reason, by reproducing easily the objects of the senses, and refusing to represent the objects whose existence is known by reason or by faith. Even if forced to give itself to the representation of unseen reality, it will escape if it can, and substitute its own creations from the materials supplied by the senses. Hence the difficulty of realizing God's Presence: things sensible, and the memory of things sensible, put His Presence out of mind; and swarms of men spend day after day, year after year, without once feeling themselves in the Presence of God.

Yet God's Presence is a fact, and the worst men confess it: so easy is it to admit a fact and live as though it were no fact at all. Misbelievers have said, "Were Jesus Christ truly in the Blessed Sacrament, so wonderful a Presence would make every Catholic a saint:" let them draw a different conclusion by their own case; they confess the Presence of God, their Creator and Lord, wherever they are, and what effect has His Presence on their lives? Men live in God's Presence and live as though there were no God: they forget His Presence.

2*nd Point.*—The proper effect of God's Presence on men. What is the effect of the presence even of an inferior? A bad man will do many things when alone, which he would not do in the presence of a servant. The shame of being seen or heard will constrain him to keep his temper, to master his

passion, to avoid a lie, to suppress a curse or rude jest. The presence of a friend or relation may put a still greater check on any wrong word or deed: but the presence of a superior, of a father or mother, or of a sovereign—what circumspection would be the consequence! And yet these are all weak creatures: they do not read men's hearts; they do not scan men's motives: if they judge and condemn, their severest punishments are, after all, mere trifles, and, at the worst, cannot extend beyond a few years. But God—God our Lord—God, the Creator of all the world, is Present with His creatures always and everywhere, and under all circumstances; the darkness is no darkness with Him, the night is as clear as the day: He reads the hearts of men, and nothing is hid from Him: He is every moment by the side of men: hears and sees every act, every thought and desire. And He is all-powerful: He has in His Hand the lightning, the pestilence, the storm. Instant death may come at His bidding, and He is as present to the soul at death and after death, as He was before. Look then at these careless men and women, infatuate in their heedlessness! How is it they do not realize the fact of the Presence of our Lord God? How is it that under His very Eye they defy His Holy Will, they trample under foot His Law: they ridicule His Attributes: they behave as though they could brave His angry indignation at their ingratitude for all His goodness, patience, and mercy? Shame upon these men and women, who owe all the good they have to our Lord God; who cannot move a hand or stir a finger without God's help:—shame on them for disregarding

God's Presence and refusing Him the respect and reverence which His Presence demands.

3rd Point.—And my conscience says to me—"Thou art the man!" I have lived day after day, year after year, in the very Presence of Him Who is my God, my Father, my Creator and Lord. When, hereafter, I shall see Him in Heaven, the very sight of Him will secure me from the possibility of sinning: faith ought now to supply the want of sight:—the just man lives by faith—by my faith then I ought to realize God's Presence. If I am in an occasion of sin—God is present: in the Church—God is present: in the assembly—in the street—in the crowd—and in my solitude, God is there;—God in Majesty, Power, and Knowledge. He is there and I am a mere nothing before Him: and all around me, men and women, persons and things, what are they, compared to my God, that they should prevail on me to offend Him, to disregard Him Who is around me, over me, in me? Who sustains me in life even when I am sinning against Him, and takes account of every idle word, and every guilty thought and desire!

Colloquy.—With my God, my Creator and Lord, really and actually Present.

Our Father.

SECOND DAY.—I.

MEANS TO ATTAIN THE END.

(3) *Serving, or doing the Will of, God.*

Whether a superior be absent or present we do his will; and under all circumstances we must, if we would win salvation, serve God or do the Will of God: and this, added to fidelity in praising Him and revering Him, completes the idea of the means by which man must save his soul.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord my God, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—"Him only shalt thou serve" (St. Matt. iv. 10). "Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

2*nd Preamble.*—Look out on the men and women covering the face of the earth, and see how their happiness stands in willing what God wills, and doing His holy Will.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord, that I may

thoroughly understand the necessity of man's serving Thee and doing Thy holy Will, that I too may understand how I stand before Thee.

1*st Point.*—God is, in fact, Lord and Master.

2*nd Point.*—God is present as man's Lord and Master.

3*rd Point.*—As God's Will is done by man, so does man stand accounted before God.

1*st Point.*—God is Lord and Master of the men and women we see on the face of the earth: not a tyrant, but the gracious and loving Master or Head of a family. Mankind is God's family. The family depends on its head for government, sustenance, direction, amusement. It is the will of the master that keeps all in harmony, and as his will is carried out, all goes well. If God's Will were done on earth as it is in Heaven, mankind would enjoy a heaven upon earth: everybody and everything would be in its place, without jarring or contention. God's Will is wise and good; but it is also powerful. It has a right to guide men: and if men would only let it guide them, where it depends on their free will, it would secure their salvation. It is His Will that none should perish: that all, after fulfilling His Will on earth, should be happy for ever. It was His Will that every individual Angel should be happy for ever and ever: it was His Will that no man should sin, but that this earth should be a Paradise: it was His Will that every soul should be saved. How plain it is that every creature ought to concur in this Will. The material and irrational

creation do, of necessity, so concur: men ought to do so, conforming freely their wills to His. But who would think, from what he sees in men and women, that they have God for their Master? What a shame that men are thoughtless of His Will—careless—or opposed to it! What a shame, and what folly too! for to go counter to a Will that is supremely wise, must be unwise: to go counter to a Will supremely powerful must be infatuation: to go counter to a Will supremely good must be malicious.

2nd Point.—God, Who is man's Lord and Master, is present. God is present to every infraction of His Law and every opposition to His holy Will. What a risk then for these silly men and women who will not do His will, as well as what a shame and what folly! The man who contradicts God's Will cannot escape notice or detection. A human superior often learns the disobedience of his dependants by hearsay: God is always present, and Himself witnesses the disobedience. He Who is Lawgiver and Judge is also Witness, and a witness that cannot be deceived. God co-operates with His creature man, in every thought, and word, and act. When man's will goes with God's Will, all is smooth; but as soon as there is opposition, it is felt; God feels it: God is thwarted, and He feels that He is thwarted.

3rd Point.—For man to conform his will with God's Will, is to save his soul. This is worth while. Salvation is to crown the praise, honour, and service paid by man to God. "Well done, good and faithful servant" are the words some day

to be spoken and to be heard. It must be worth man's while to secure such a greeting. "Because thou hast been faithful over a *few* things, be thou ruler over many." The servant who has praised, and revered, and served his Master, God, is to be associated with his Master in peace, for ever. And he is sure of his reward. It is not as it was with Joseph in Egypt, whose faithful service was recompensed with imprisonment: God is not deceived, and as surely as He detects the insincere service of the hypocrite, He discerns the good heart and the sincere purpose where men's judgment may misjudge and condemn.

What a shame then if our God, Whose intentions are all charity towards men, should be dishonoured by them and disobeyed. If He is a Master, where is His honour? If a Father, where is His fear? Let us take part with our God, and denounce the madness, and the folly, and the ingratitude of those, who choose other masters than God, hard taskmasters, who promise a little pleasure now, but at the cost of God's displeasure and the loss of the soul.

Colloquy.—O Lord, my God, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give me grace to praise, and honour, and serve Thee faithfully on earth, and to win the prize Thou hast promised in Heaven.

Our Father.

SECOND DAY.—II.

THE USE OF CREATURES.

The instruments with which man has to praise, honour, and do the will of, God.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—Creatures are to help man as the instruments towards his end.

2*nd Preamble.*—We see men surrounded by various kinds of creatures, things and persons, all of which may be employed in the service of God, or may be abused to unworthy purposes.

3*rd Preamble.*—Enlighten my understanding, O Lord, to understand the use of the creatures with which Thou hast surrounded me, and give me grace to use them as instruments towards the salvation of my soul.

1*st Point.*—What are the creatures which are given me by God as instruments to help me in praising, honouring, and serving Him? There are the mighty works of God's hand which fill the immensity of space; the stars, the nebulæ, the sun, the planets—and no doubt all these can serve man

in praising God and saving his own soul. They prove God's Being, and His Greatness and Goodness, and man ought to use them as proofs of natural religion: but we want now to come nearer home; not to lose ourselves in speculations however valuable, but to come to our daily life. We have in this point of view little to do with the rings of Saturn, the spots on the Sun, or the Mountains in the Moon. The snows of Lapland too, and the heights of the Andes are too far off to concern us now, though they also are creatures of God. There are other creatures closer to us, which concern us more nearly, and by our use of which we are much better able to praise, revere and serve our Lord God. What are these creatures? Those that immediately surround us and make up the circumstances of our daily life: by our behaviour with regard to these creatures, by our use or abuse of these, we praise God and recommend our God to our neighbours, or we do the contrary. If men see that because we are Catholics and children of God, we behave well in the use of the creatures which surround us, then we recommend our faith and the God Whom by this faith we adore and worship, to those around us: we praise our God, and make our neighbours think better of Him. If our neighbours see that we use lawful pleasures with moderation, and bear sufferings with patience because by so doing we mean to do the Will of our God, then we are recommending our God to them. And what then are the creatures which so intimately surround us, and on our use of which depends, so far as we are concerned, the credit,—the glory of our God? Let us consider

some of them, and thoughtfully meditate on the various ways in which we can use them so as to do credit to our Lord God by using them well, or do Him dishonour by a faulty use of them. Consider then how we can use or abuse (1) the house, the room, the garden where we live: the persons with whom we live, our relations, parents, brothers, sisters, husband, wife, friends, intimates, acquaintances, servants, visitors, strangers, with whom we have to do. (2) Consider how we may use or abuse, our daily lodging and board; our food, our studies, our clothes, our occupations, our business, our amusements. (3) There are creatures which are closer still to us, which we can use or abuse to the credit or dishonour of our God, namely, our bodies, our limbs, our features. (4) Nay, there are creatures closer still which God has given us, and which we are bound to use to His credit and our own salvation, and which we can abuse to His dishonour and our everlasting loss, namely, our very souls themselves and their several faculties, our reason and our will, our capacities of aversion and of love, of desire, of resentment, of attachment. Dwell on these, and especially on those of them which you are most apt to use improperly, or which you may use most availably to the end of your creation,—God's Glory and your own salvation.

2nd Point.—All these creatures can be used for God's Praise. Take any one you like and consider how it may be so used. Nature supplies proofs of God's existence: the fragrance of a flower has filled a holy soul with rapture and ecstatic love of God. As an example, consider the body, which Galen calls

a hymn praising God. It can be used for good. The modesty of some has won souls to the love of modesty and the practice of religion. Then take the features and limbs of the body, and if we use them as though each of them were labelled, *Soli Deo* —"God's Property," think how every moment would be spent to the Glory of God and tend to everlasting life.

3rd Point.—These creatures may be abused. A rope was let down to help a boy out of a well. He tied it round his neck and it throttled him. So creatures, meant by God to raise men from earth to Heaven, may be misapplied, abused, and become destructive. So men abuse the food, the comforts, the sufferings sent them by God; and sometimes the best creatures are worst abused. Great talents are sometimes used against God instead of for Him: beauty is abused to seduce to evil: riches which might feed the poor and promote God's service are abused to luxury and intemperance: so also with rank and personal influence, eloquence, and bodily health. Take an example in the tongue. This member eminently fitted to praise God, how is it abused! instead of charity it deals in calumny; instead of speaking well of God it denies His very Being, and blasphemes. Therefore also does it belong to us, not merely to use creatures so as to praise God, but so as to repair the dishonour done to Him by the abuse of them by others.

Colloquy.—To God, our Creator and Lord, Who has given us all these creatures, and Whose glory we desire to promote.

Our Father.

SECOND DAY.—III.

THE USE OF CREATURES.

Creatures in themselves and in their use or abuse.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord my God, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—Man must use creatures with reference to the End of his creation, namely, to save his soul.

2*nd Preamble.*—We look out upon the world and see men surrounded by various kinds of creatures, things and persons, all of which may be serviceable to the salvation of his soul or abused to its loss.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord, that I may understand the proper use of the creatures with which Thou hast surrounded me, and give me grace to make them minister to my salvation.

1*st Point.*—The one true measure of the value of creatures, viz., How they are made to contribute to the praise, honour, and service of God, their Creator.

2nd Point.—Creatures in themselves, are indifferent.

3rd Point.—Man must use creatures as indifferent in themselves, and not be under their power.

1st Point.—Creatures pass away. Life however long, riches however great, honours however exalted, all pass. We have had as contemporaries men of the highest genius and position, who now are dead. We have had kings, millionaires, philosophers, men of science, women of transcendent beauty and wit: where are they now? Their present actual state has been determined according to the way in which they used the creatures which God lent them for their use: not by the creatures they used, but by the use they made of them: it is not what they have had, but how they have used it. Some have had long life and have done nothing for God,—have not used their time to God's praise and service, but have lived,—have used their time, for sensuality; some have had great honours, and used them only for themselves in this life: some have had wealth and spent it on unworthy objects: others have lived but few years but employed every day in God's service: others have used their wealth in beneficence: others have sanctified their poverty and misery by the patience and resignation with which they have borne them, knowing that, after all, God was not forgetting them but cared for them as for the apple of His eye. Think of St. Agnes, whose life was so short; of St. John, whose life was so long; of Crassus, who had such riches: of Joseph, who was so poor: of the victors in the Grecian games, who were so strong;

of Lazarus, who was covered with sores: of Wellington, who enjoyed such honour; of the many who now are in Heaven and their names not heard of on earth: and see, that it is not honour or dishonour, long life or short life, health or sickness, wealth or poverty, that has secured salvation or incurred condemnation, but that it is the way in which men have used these that has saved some and ruined others.

2nd Point.—Creatures are then in themselves indifferent, and ought not to be regarded by men as capable of giving happiness by themselves, but as capable of leading to happiness everlasting if they are rightly used. Man must not then be in love with creatures, nor fix his heart upon them. They are the temporary instruments towards unending felicity if used to the praise and service of our Lord God: if men set their hearts upon them and fail to use them to the praise and service of God, the short-lived happiness which may be found in them will pass away as they pass, and afterwards there will remain nothing but the punishment for having failed to live to the praise and credit of God;—salvation will be lost and it will be discovered how fearful a thing it is to abuse God's goodness in the misuse of His creatures.

3rd Point.—Man must use creatures as being in themselves indifferent: he must not be under their power, but use them for his own purpose, and for his own one purpose, which is, the salvation of his soul. There must be no creature on the face of the earth for the sake of which he would willingly entertain the deliberate purpose of winning or enjoying it, if its attainment or enjoyment is forbidden by God

and runs counter to the End of Man, the salvation of his soul: there must be no person, no thing in God's creation which man would love in such a way as to sacrifice, to his present enjoyment of it, his future everlasting salvation. Is there man or woman, for the love of whom I would wilfully and deliberately sin grievously, or expose myself to the danger of sinning grievously? if so, I do not regard that creature as an instrument of praising and serving God, and saving my soul, but it usurps the place of God: I prefer it to God and fall short of the End for which God created me and created it. Of course there are degrees in the undue attachment to creatures, and the degrees may be estimated by the degree in which I would offend God for the creature's sake, but if I would wilfully go counter to the praise and service of God for any creature's sake in any degree, so far do I go counter to the End for which God created me and it, and I hazard my salvation.

Colloquy.—O Lord my God, my Creator and Lord; Creator and Lord of all the various creatures with which I am surrounded; Thou Who hast set me in the midst of these that they might form the ladder by which I might ascend to Heaven, grant that I may understand and take to heart the vanity of creatures, and never fix my affections on them in such a way as to interfere with the purpose for which Thou gavest them to me, namely, to use them to Thy Praise and Honour and Service, and thereby to save my soul.

Our Father.

SECOND DAY.—IV.

THE WRECK OF THE ANGELS, WHO FELL SHORT OF THE END OF THEIR CREATION.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord my God, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I figure to myself my soul banished from the Paradise originally intended for its home, and now exiled like Nabuchodonosor among the brute beasts, imprisoned in a body subject to corruption, dwelling in this valley of earth.

2*nd Preamble.*—Enlighten my understanding, O Lord my God, to understand how many there have been who have been irretrievably lost for fewer sins than mine, and fill me with confusion for the multitude of my sins.

1*st Point.*—What matters it if I fall short of and miss the end of my creation?

2*nd Point.*—What was the fact as regards the Angels?

3*rd Point.*—Compare my case with theirs.

1*st Point.*—What matters it if I choose to enjoy myself with creatures, though at the expense of offending God? What matters it? I am so insignificant, and God so great that, surely, my refusal to use creatures as I ought cannot hurt God,—cannot interfere with His happiness, and therefore I may well expect to get off scot-free? Doubtless my refusal is an act of contempt; and contemptuous behaviour towards God in such a worm as I am, proves me to be infatuated; but, after all, supposing that I choose to act foolishly, is there any reason to look for worse consequences?

I cannot answer this question by experience in my own case. I can neither see the present effect of my refusal, that is, of sin, upon my soul now; nor can I experience now the effect that will ensue to my soul when death puts an end to this time of trial. If the commission of a grievous sin suddenly changed the body into a loathsome mass of corruption, so that my neighbours could not come within a mile's distance of me, I should have reason indeed to dread the consequences of sin: but there is no sensible effect on the body, and my soul is invisible. Therefore I will look for some others who were created for the same end as myself, and who failed of that end, and I will see what happened to them. What was the case with the Angels?

2*nd Point.*—The Angels were created to win happiness for eternity. They were to win this end by praising, revering, and doing the Will of God. A number of them refused to praise, revere, and serve our Lord God, that is, a number of them sinned mortally, and what was the consequence?

They became a wreck. These Angels were created and endowed with grace; they were also endowed with freewill, and it was their part by the help of their freewill, to show reverence and obedience to their Creator and Lord. But they would be independent; they would not submit; they lifted themselves up against their Creator and Lord, and fell into a grievous sin of Pride. What was the result? Their grace was changed into malice and they were precipitated from Heaven into Hell. Through sin,—through one sin—one grievous sin, all their beauty was changed into deformity, their glory into shame, their happiness into misery, and instead of everlasting life they have incurred everlasting death—everlasting separation from God, Who is the only source of light and joy and peace and happiness. The Angels who refused to fulfil the end for which they were created, have become a wreck.

3rd Point.—What then will happen to me if I fall short of the end for which God has created me? I, too, shall become a wreck. I do not see the effect in my soul, but I know that this is the result of sin; the result, as I have seen in the Angels, of one deliberate mortal sin. If then I have committed in my life one deliberate mortal sin,—once broken friendship with my Creator and Lord by (wilfully and with my eyes open) daring, with full knowledge of what I was doing, to perpetrate a mortal sin, my soul that instant became a wreck. And if this is true of one such mortal sin, what if I have committed two, or three, or ten, or a hundred mortal sins? What a miserable wreck has my soul become! And God has spared me! He has not cut

me off as He did the Angels at the first act of mortal sin; He has been patient with me, week after week, perhaps year after year; perhaps while I was living in a habit of mortal sin. Oh, shame on me for my ingratitude! Oh, may I be full of confusion and grief for my folly, and misery, and infatuation.

Colloquy.—With our Lord Jesus Christ, Whom I imagine to myself as present, hanging on the Cross. How was it that Thou, my Creator, didst stoop so low as to become man? to come down from everlasting life to die like men, to die for my sins? O, what have I hitherto done for Christ? What am I at this moment doing for Christ? What ought I now to do for Christ? O, look on Him on the Cross, and may my heart be filled with the holy thoughts and desires that the sight of Him inspires.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

Our Father.

THIRD DAY—I.

THE WRECK OF THE WORLD AND OF A SOUL MISSING THE END OF THEIR CREATION.

The Angels are not the only beings who were created for the same end as myself: I may see the effect of the creature falling short of the end of his creation in the world I live in and in any lost soul.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I figure to myself my soul banished from the Paradise originally intended for its home, and now exiled like Nabuchodonosor among the brute beasts, imprisoned in a body subject to corruption, dwelling in this valley of the earth.

2*nd Preamble.*—Enlighten my understanding, O Lord my God, to understand how many there have been irretrievably lost for fewer sins than mine, and fill me with confusion for the multitude of my sins.

1*st Point.*—What matters it if I choose to enjoy myself with creatures though at the expense of offending God? I have received an answer to this question by seeing in the angels the effect of their falling short of the end of their creation. They have become a wreck. Lucifer, made for highest glory, now does the drudgery of Hell. The terribleness of the effect proves the terribleness of the cause: the fearful wreck proves what a fearful thing it must be to refuse to fulfil the end for which God created us. But we need not leave the world we dwell in to witness the effects of the same cause. The world was created to be a happy world,—to be filled with happy men and women, loving, serving and praising God, and helping each other in His service: to be One Holy Church, unspotted even as regards its separate members. And what do we see? Division, enmities, avarice, intemperance, ignorance, infidelity, paganism, Mahometanism, rapine, and impurity. The world is a wreck. And what was the cause? One act of rebellion: one deliberate refusal to fulfil the end of creation. Our first parents, created in justice, were required to show their allegiance to their Creator and Lord, by an easy sign of obedience: they were clearly warned of the death which would follow their refusing the sign of their loyalty: they listened to a tempter and preferred his counsel to that of God: they sinned, and the infection brought in by them has spread like leprosy over the world: the world has become a wreck. If I then have done as my first parents did; if, knowing clearly and distinctly how I was bound to praise, honour, and

serve my God, and knowing how to do this and what would be the effect of the contrary—if, in spite of all, I have wilfully chosen to fall short of this purpose of my creation, what has happened to my soul? It too has become a wreck. I do not see the wreck, for I cannot take my soul in my hand and look at it, but I know that the same causes produce the same effects;—if I then have fallen short of the end of my creation,—my soul has become a wreck!

2nd Point.—We may reflect on a case even more parallel to our own. Among the 100,000 who died yesterday, it may be that there is one who was overtaken by death in the very act of committing his first grievous sin,—the first sin which, knowing it to be a mortal sin, he with full deliberation committed. If a man, after long trifling with grace, playing with sin, neglecting sacraments and prayer, indulging in evil company, pampering self more and more, sinning venial sins more and more approaching to grievous sin,—if such a man, at last, exposes himself wilfully to the danger of a real mortal sin,—what wonder if he fall and die in it? Where is he now? In Hell he has too late opened his eyes to his folly, and he has become a wreck: he is there miserable, hopeless, lost for ever. He knows the glorious destiny that was proposed to him,—endless, unutterable joy and happiness: that he was intended, with the happy company of Heaven, to enjoy the possession, without fear of losing it, of all good: and now the words of Christ are realized; for him the worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished: no good and generous thoughts in that soul now, nothing amiable, nothing beautiful: all malice, all hideous

corruption, without even the desire of reconciliation with God! And this, as we have supposed, for one mortal sin. He is a wreck!

3rd Point.—And what of myself, then? Have I in my life thus wilfully sinned? Knowing God's will, have I acted in defiance of it by the deliberate choice of sin in a grievous matter? If so, see the wreck that I have made of my soul. And it may be that I have committed more than one such sin: perhaps two, or six, or ten, or a hundred, or perhaps I have formed some habit of mortal sin, and cannot count the number of sins that I have committed. O, what a wreck I have made of my poor soul! And what mercy in God not to have let me die in that dreadful state! What wonderful mercy to have given me the opportunity of having this wreck repaired,—through the good use of this Retreat,—by the precious Blood and atonement of Jesus Christ! But let me remember that there is such a thing as the measure of iniquity. God has been patient with me hitherto: He had predetermined not to cast me away for ever for the number of sins I have hitherto committed, but to leave me still with the possibility of recovery: but, who knows? were I to sin mortally again, the very next sin may fill up the measure of my iniquity, and I may die in that sin and perish for ever: perish, when I might have been saved so easily: when God wished to save me: when salvation was in my hands: a wreck, a wreck for ever!

Colloquy.—O my Lord Jesus Christ, hanging on the Cross for me! How was it that Thou, my Creator, didst stoop so low and become Man;

didst come down from everlasting life to die like men,—to die for my sins? O, what have I hitherto done for Christ? What am I at this moment doing for Christ? What ought I now to do for Christ? While I look on Thee, O my Lord Jesus Christ, hanging on the Cross, may my soul be filled with the holy thoughts and good resolutions that such a sight ought to inspire.

Hail Mary.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

Our Father.

THIRD DAY.—II.

THE INDICTMENT.

Am I concerned in that which I have hitherto meditated? It is plain indeed that God has created me and that I ought to praise Him, revere Him and do His Will, and so save my soul, but have I fallen short of this end for which He created me? Have I anything to do with the meditations which show what a wreck is caused by sin?

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I place myself before Jesus Christ, my Judge, to give an account of my stewardship,—of the manner in which I have used the creatures lent to me by Him as the instruments of praising, honouring, and doing the Will of God.

2*nd Preamble.*—Give me light, O Lord, to know how sadly I have fallen short of the end for which Thou didst create me; give me sorrow of heart and sincere contrition.

1*st Point.*—I will pass in review my life in the bitterness of my soul. Have I fallen short of the

end of my creation? Have I sinned? Have I sinned grievously? If so, I have made a wreck of my poor soul: I have forfeited salvation and incurred the anger of my God. And that I may the better arraign myself before my Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, I will call to mind the different places where I have lived and in which I have done anything. Where was I born, and where did I pass my childhood? my early youth? my later years? And while I pass in review the places, I will at the same time call to mind the persons with whom I have lived or with whom I have had dealings:—my parents, my brothers and sisters, my acquaintances, my intimate friends, strangers, dependents, superiors, rivals. And besides the persons and places, I will call to mind the various relations in which I have stood to them, and the duties which those relations involved,—the offices I have held,—the positions of trust and responsibility:—and I will consider how I have fulfilled them or fallen short of my duty, or grossly violated it.

What has been my behaviour towards God? my prayers? my realization of His Presence? my gratitude for His blessings? my resignation when I have been in suffering? my behaviour in His house:—can the walls of the Church bear witness against me for irreverence? or lightness of behaviour? or sacrilege? the confessional where I have gone to confess my sins? the altar rail? the sacristy? the choir? Mass or Vespers or Benediction? Festivals and Fasts? my faith? my mistrust or diffidence? my presumption? or despair or despondency? my recourse to earthly or sinful

pleasures instead of bearing patiently? Have I refused to praise and revere and do the will of my God? and often? and so, have I made a wreck of my soul;—and over and over again, by grievous sin against the first table of the Law?

And my behaviour to my neighbour? men? and women? old? and young? my elders? and my inferiors? my relations? my enemies? in my childhood? and youth? in my adult age? As regards my temper? as regards my parents? as regards my brothers and sisters? as regards justice? running into debt? harming my creditors? as regards chastity? persons? places? and kind of persons? sins? and occasions of sin? scandal to others? Then as regards truthfulness? my neighbour's good name? and have I fallen short of the end for which God made me? and often? and made a wreck of my soul? and over and over again? and God has spared me!

And my behaviour as regards myself? my health? my sickness? the secret chamber? the still hours of night? the privacy of my chamber? the streets? the gardens? the places of amusement? parties of pleasure? intemperance? waste of time? sloth? Have I fallen short of my end by using my time amiss? my hands? my body? my eyes? my whole being? and my limbs and features? my talents and my influence? my money and my credit? Woe's me; my soul, a wreck!

Then, reflect on the malice of sin. No need to have explicit denunciation of any of these grievous sins; our conscience condemns them. Their malice is evident without any new revelation. Grievous sin

is denounced by the concordant voice of all around me. I could have no plea of ignorance; if I had and so far as I had, I know there is not mortal sin, and thank God for that: thank God that many things that I can call to mind, bad as they may be in themselves, were not committed with full knowledge of their malice: but alas! for those many sins committed with clear knowledge of their being sins and mortal sins! What turpitude in themselves! what ingratitude to God! what scandal to my neighbour! what degradation of myself! I, who was made in the image of God, allowing myself to be carried away by brute passion! I, who was made a child of God, committing sins which would have disgraced the poor ignorant savage or pagan. And not merely once or twice: not content with wrecking my soul with one sin, I have gone on from sin to sin, drinking down iniquity like water: spending days, and weeks, and months, and years, in frequent or habitual commission of mortal sins. And all this, in spite of warnings and sacraments: warnings which I have despised though mercifully sent by God for my recovery; sacraments, which I have perhaps profaned. And what good has it done me? If I could see my soul after grievous sin as my Guardian Angel sees it, how would it appear? crusted over with a foul leprosy and stinking in the nostrils of my patient, long-suffering God? Were a grievous sin to infect my body in such a way as to drive away my neighbours to a mile's distance in consequence of its foul fetor, I should have some little notion of the filthiness of sin: but it is worse, a hundred times worse, and after death, should I

perish, when I appreciate things as they are, the fetid corruption of my lost soul will amaze me and horrify me for ever.

Colloquy.—O Mary, sinless Virgin and my tender Mother, how often have I obliged thee to turn away thine eyes from me when I was committing foul and shameful sin? Thou desirest the praise and honour of the God Whose favourite child thou art; win me back to Him: win for me grace; grace of contrition for the past, grief for my present weakness and irresolution, and hatred of the allurements of the world.

Hail Mary.

O Jesus Christ! I have crucified Thee afresh, over and over again: Thou hast been put to shame for my shameful sins: I grieve over the past, and am sorry for all my ingratitude: I grieve over the present,—my weakness and want of generosity: I hate the world which crucified Thee and tempts me to be ungrateful to Thee and to abandon Thee.

Anima Christi, p. 32.

O Eternal Father! fountain of good, and God of all mercy; didst Thou deserve such behaviour at my hands?—that I should abuse all the blessings with which Thou hast encompassed me? that I should turn them against Thee, and ruin my soul which Thou madest for Thyself, that it might be happy and praise Thee for ever? I mourn and am covered with confusion for the past: I lament my present weakness and irresolution: and I renounce the world which is in rebellion against Thee, and which tempts me to sin.

Our Father.

THIRD DAY.—III.

AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I am before Jesus Christ, self-condemned.

2*nd Preamble.*—Grant me light, O Lord my God, to understand the sadness of my shortcomings; give me sorrow of heart and earnest contrition.

1*st Point.*—Who and what am I that I should have thought so much of myself and so little of my God? What have I to boast of? A little while ago I did not even exist and God gave me being, bringing me out of nothing. And now that I exist, is it for me to boast of what I am and of what I have, as though anything were my own? Ought I not rather to give God the glory and only take shame to myself that I have not made better use of His gifts than I have? Had I thought of Him instead of myself: had I only done His Will instead

of my own, what progress should I have made, and the talents He has given me, however small they are, might have been doubled. But they have continued in their insignificance or been wasted, because I preferred myself to God, and they have become infected with vanity and pride. Though they are God's gifts, they are necessarily small, because they are created: and among created things, do they occupy a high place, if any can be called high? What am I in fact (who think so much of myself) if I compare myself with what surrounds me? I am a unit in the number of the rest of men: they number millions; a handful of these millions are known by me and know me; the rest of the millions know nothing of me. I am no more to them than a beggar in a poor Chinese village is to me. How unimportant then am I, compared with my fellow-men: and little worth anybody's while it were to make much of me, or to make my name known to a few more half-dozens out of the millions who dwell on the earth. And yet I practically have regarded myself as of supreme importance, for when I ought to have been thinking of God and His glory, I have engrossed myself with myself. What an atom am I in the sight of God when compared with all mankind! How is it that God can have any thought of me? How can I think much of myself?

But all mankind compared with the generations that are gone, but which still exist in the world of spirits, is as insignificant to say the least as I am, compared with all mankind. The Blessed in Heaven, the Angels in Heaven are millions of millions. They

are occupied in praising God: their millions of voices praise Him and they desire the children of men to join their feeble voices in praising Him, and they would have me, as one of the number, praise God: and I praise myself: I seek myself: the very acts that I do and which are in themselves to God's glory, I do for my own glory—for instance, I can be self-conceited in hearing Mass! I in the midst of millions of men and millions of millions of glorious spirits, can practically consider myself as the one being to be concerned about and prefer my contemptible littleness to anything and everything else in creation.

And all mankind and the Angelic hosts vanish into nothing when compared with God. He is so great that what seems immensely great to man is as nothing compared with His Infinity. The distance of the earth from the furthest fixed star is infinitely less to Him than the length of my room to me, for—He is—Infinite. And I in sinning have preferred myself and my importance not merely to the millions of men or the millions of millions of spirits but to Him before whom these millions and millions of millions are infinitely less than a drop of water compared with the whole visible universe: I have set up my will against His infinite Will: I have been taken up in my own importance and counted Him as nothing: I have sought praise and honour and service for myself and behaved as though He were unworthy of them.

And I have preferred myself thus, whenever I failed to regard His Will, though I have been not

merely a nothing before Him, but worse than nothing; for I have preferred my corrupt inclinations before Him: I have preferred a filthy abscess and cesspool of corruption before the Infinite God.

O miserable sins of my past life, by which I showed my infatuated preference of myself to God: O wretched state in which I am now, so sadly infected by self, in consequence of those past sins: O wretched world and flesh which pamper my wretched self and would keep me in sin. Mary, my dear Mother, obtain for me from thy Son a true sense of my past sins, of my present weakness and of the dangers of the world and pray that I may hate them and renounce them.

Hail Mary.

Repeat the words, O miserable sins, &c., *and add*

Jesus, Master, have mercy and obtain for me from Thy Eternal Father grace to recognize my past sins, my present weakness, and the dangers of the world and the flesh, that I may hate them and renounce them.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

Repeat the words, O miserable, &c., *and add*

O Eternal Father, grant me grace to understand my past sins that I may hate them: my present instability that I may grieve over it, and the seductions of the flesh and of the world, that I may hate them and renounce them.

Our Father.

2nd Point.—And the foul abscess which I am I have preferred to Him Who is infinite,—to Him Who is infinite not in greatness merely but in every perfection opposed to every corruption of mine. I have preferred my wisdom to His, that is, my ignorance to His infinite wisdom:—I have acted as though I were wiser than He: I have lived as though His law were unfit to guide my life and as though I knew better than He what was best for me to do: I have measured my strength against His, for by wilfully sinning I have challenged Him to the combat: that is, I have defied His infinite strength and shaken my puny fist in His Face: I have made my opinion the rule of what is right instead of His supreme judgment, that is, I have set up my iniquity as preferable to His Divine Justice: I have preferred my malice to His Goodness and presumed to wish to have praise and respect and service done to me who am made up of ignorance, weakness, iniquity and malice, and denied to Him Who is All-wise, All-powerful, All-just and All-good.

3rd Point.—And I, this less than atom: this abscess of corruption, have been thus preferring my foul self, and despising God, the infinite Goodness, in the presence of the creatures of God, who know Him and love Him and serve Him faithfully. These

creatures themselves I have in many cases abused and employed against their proper use, which is, to honour God, and I have forced them to minister to my self-service, my self-worship. How is it that they have not combined against me? Before now the earth has swallowed up the blasphemer, the sea has drowned the wicked, the fire has consumed the corrupt, the Angels have been the Sword of God's vengeance. How is it they have spared me and instead of destroying me, they have supported me in life, fed me, warmed me, clothed me, prayed for me and protected me? O mercy and grace unutterable! Well might the earth have opened under me and I been buried in Hell, prepared for my especial malice—and instead: I am safe, I can be saved: I have but to will it and I am forgiven.

Colloquy.—With our Lord God, remonstrating with Him for His excessive goodness to me and giving Him thanks for having preserved my life to the present moment, when I earnestly desire and purpose, by the help of His grace to amend all—to hide myself in my own nothingness—and to praise and revere and serve His Divine Majesty.

Our Father.

THIRD DAY.—IV.

THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I will picture to myself the Prison-house of the lost; the length and breadth and depth of Hell.

2*nd Preamble.*—Grant me, O Lord, to have a clear insight into the pains of the lost souls that so, in case my faults should prevent the love of my Eternal Lord and Father from keeping me from grievous sin, the fear of its punishment at least may scare me from it.

The application of the senses:

1*st Point.*—Open thine eyes, O my soul, and look steadily at the objects of sight which revelation makes known to thee in the place of punishment. Think what is meant by the fires of Hell, when Jesus Christ speaks of the fire that is not extinguished.

It is no trifle: Send Lazarus, cries Dives, that he may cool my tongue. It is no trifle: we know not what it is, but the gentlest heart that ever beat has thought fit to tell us of it, that we may take warning and give up sin.

Blessed be God Who (like a tender mother who scares away her child from danger by holding him for a moment over the edge of the terrible cliff) tells us of the everlasting consequences of mortal sin. Surely if after such gracious warning I persevere in sin or relapse into sin, I shall have no one but myself to blame. O gracious Lord and Master, Who exhaustest every means to keep me from the misery of sin!

2nd Point.—Hear, O my soul, the sounds that proceed from Hell. Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. No cry for mercy or of repentance, for the lost are now God's enemies and full of malice and do not even wish for reconciliation; their pride is that of demons, and they *will* not repent: their wills are fixed in malice. No cry for mercy, but cries of envy for the happiness of the Saints: blasphemies against God Who made them and gave them all that was needful for their salvation; and they would not be saved: blasphemies against Christ Who died for them and Whom they crucified over and over again, profaning His Sacraments, treading under foot His Blood: blasphemies against Mary and the Saints who possess inalienably that which they themselves might have made their own, so easily.

Blessed be God Who opens my ears to the blasphemies of the lost, that I may shrink from

the sins of the tongue which involve so fearful punishment.

3rd Point.—Note, my soul, the fetid odours that steam up from the abyss—the stench of sulphur, the foulness of the cesspool,—are figures of this fearful punishment of those who have abused sweet perfumes to the purposes of sin. No fragrance here as in the Paradise of God: stifling, choking fumes exhibit to us the disgust which the lost souls experience in their separation from God and all good. Nothing to refresh—nothing to cheer. The rottenness which sin produces often, even in this life, is the earnest of the offensiveness which the lost will find in themselves and in their companions in punishment.

Blessed be God Who shows me the contrast between the dungeon and Paradise; and would thus force me to secure the latter through the very horror of the former.

4th Point.—The bitterness of taste: O bitter tears and bitter remorse without repentance; anguish without sorrow: pain without contrition: wormwood and gall are figures of the mental tortures of the lost soul: conscience, conscience, conscience torments for ever.

Blessed be God Who scares me from the seductiveness of sin by revealing the bitterness concealed beneath it: I will not eat the honey that is mixed with arsenic.

5th Point.—The fire touches, smarts and scorches: how does the soul smart for the sins of touch done in the flesh! While on earth, the reprobate put God out of mind and did not recognize in Him the

Author of all good: after death, he recognizes God as the Fountain of good, and thirsts for good, but it is far from him. He is on fire and burns with the want of good and he can never enjoy it: here is indeed a consuming fire but which ever consumes and never destroys: here is a fire that is never extinguished.

Blessed be God for making known to me the pains of Hell: my God, by Thy grace I will never taste them, for I repent of my past sins and I will praise and reverence and serve Thee instead of sinfully indulging myself, for the future.

Thank God I still live: I am not one of those who, before Christ came, or while He was on earth, or since He came, rejected Him and died impenitent: or who believed in Him, and yet sinned grievously and never repented. I can save my soul, if I like, blessed be God: and He wishes me to save it, and gives me every necessary means to do so.

Our Father.

FOURTH DAY.—I.

THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I will picture to myself the synagogues, towns, and villages through which Christ our Lord passed and preached.

2*nd Preamble.*—O Thou Who art our Lord, grant me grace not to be deaf when Thou callest me, but prompt and diligent to fulfil Thy most holy will.

1*st Point.*—Jesus Christ calls me to follow Him.

2*nd Point.*—Of course I ought to follow.

3*rd Point.*—If I would be generous, I shall offer myself and all I have, without reserve.

1*st Point.*—Jesus Christ calls me to follow Him. I have meditated the End of my Creation and seen the misery of falling short of it and how sadly I have by sin fallen short of it. I have confessed my

sins with sorrow of heart: the millstone has been taken from around my neck: the prison has been opened and now, what have I to do?

And Jesus Christ appears, meek and gracious, and says to me, Follow Me. If thou wilt follow Me and be like Me, you will fulfil the end of your creation and save your soul. Look at Me and looking at Me you will grow like Me. I am become Man for your sake and know your weaknesses and I will help you; for I am God also and can give you grace to imitate Me. Nay! come and help Me. For I am sent by My Father to recover mankind, as a son might be sent by his royal father to bring under his sway the nations that had rebelled against him. I am of right your Captain; enlist under My standard and follow Me. And if you would know what will be required of you, be sure that I shall require nothing of you to which I do not submit, Myself. Only be contented with such food as I use, such lodging and such clothing as I use: watch with Me by night, labour with Me by day and I pledge to you My word that your efforts shall be crowned with victory and that your share in My victory shall be proportioned to your share in My labours, to the degree in which you have resembled Me.

Thus Jesus Christ invites me to follow Him, and, moreover, invites me to the honour of helping Him in recovering others to their salvation. Indeed it is eminently by doing this that I am to show praise and honour and do service to my Lord God. In following Jesus Christ I shall do this: in doing what He does, desiring what He desires, suffering what He suffers, I shall, as a matter of course, be praising,

revering and serving my God in the best way I can. I need hardly think of the law imposed on me of praising and serving my God, since my attachment to and my looking at and following Jesus Christ will certainly secure my obedience to that law, even without my thinking of it.

2nd Point.—I will be like Jesus Christ: Yes! Lord, I will follow Thee. Common sense would have it that I should follow Thee. What more winning attraction than to have before my eyes Jesus Christ, meek and humble of heart? As I look at Him I shall by looking at Him get acquainted with Him, and I shall by becoming acquainted with Him get to love Him, and when I love Him and am familiar with Him, of course I shall do nothing to give Him pain, that is, I shall not sin, but with Him I shall praise, and honour and serve the Lord God Almighty and try to win others also to fulfil the end of their creation. I will then be like Jesus Christ; what this may mean, I shall learn by looking at Him, watching Him, contemplating Him: but of this I am sure, that there is nothing better than to listen to His voice and follow Him. Therefore as every good citizen who might be invited by the King's son to enlist under his standard for the honour of his father, would at once accept the invitation, so, by the grace of God, will I.

3rd Point—And it shall be without reserve.—There is a difference in the men who, accepting the invitation of the King's son, enlist under his banner. Some do it with reserves, some unreservedly. Some have attachments to home comforts and family ties and the like, and their hearts are still in part with

these while they enlist as soldiers under the King's son. Others are wholly free: without anything to divide their hearts; without family ties, or else, foregoing the entanglement of such family and domestic ties, they are ready to give up all they have for the use of their Sovereign. They will not only fight for him and follow his son in the camp and battlefield, but they are ready to give up all their property, to renounce the prospects of marriage, to forego worldly preferment, and the accumulation of fortune, if it be required of them, for the greater honour of their Sovereign. And there are Christians, men and women, who are not satisfied with doing the least that is required of them, but who desire to signalize themselves in the way in which they follow Jesus Christ. They are ready to renounce all they possess if He indicate that they would please Him by doing so; to forego the endearments of domestic life if He should ask them; to make extraordinary sacrifices and to expose themselves even to the loss of life by martyrdom, if He should invite them to it. It does not follow that all such generous souls should at once make vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and enter religious life: it may be more to God's glory that they should not, but they will be *ready* to do this,—to make any sacrifice,—to undertake any toil and labour, if God should point out to them that it would be to His greater glory that they should do so. These generous souls seek not only God's glory, but His greater glory: of two courses, both good, they will choose the better even though more difficult: they are not content merely with praising, honouring and serving Him, but they would do all

this (if He would have them) extraordinarily: they would not merely conquer what is bad in them and do good: but they would even deny themselves things otherwise lawful, and mortify their senses in things indifferent, and go counter to self and to the world, even in matters which do not involve sin, if only they can more closely follow Jesus Christ and with Him, promote His Father's glory. Their language will be;—

O Eternal Lord and Master of all things, I do now, with Thy help and favour, in the Presence of Thy Infinite Goodness and in the sight of Thy glorious Mother and of all Thy sons and daughters in the court of Heaven, make the offering of myself, protesting that it is my wish and desire and that it is my deliberate resolve—provided it be more to Thy service and Thy greater honour—to imitate Thee in bearing all possible ill-treatment and all unjust accusations and all the trials of poverty, actual no less than spiritual, if it be the will of thy Most Sacred Majesty to choose me to this kind of life and to admit me to it.

FOURTH DAY.—II.

THE INCARNATION.

Obscurity and Contempt.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1st Preamble.—The Three Persons of the Holy Trinity looking down on the earth, see mankind on their way to destruction, and decree in their eternity the Incarnation of the Second Person for man's salvation: in the fulness of time, the Angel Gabriel is sent to our Lady for the Annunciation.

2nd Preamble.—Set before you the wide, wide world thronged with men of various nations: then set before you the cottage and room where our Lady lives in the town of Nazareth, in the province of Galilee.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, intimately to know my Lord Who for my sake was made Man, and knowing Him, may I love Him and walk in His steps.

1st Point.—The Persons. Men throng the world: made for life everlasting: able to save themselves,

for God is ever at hand to help: able to praise and serve God but now, through their own fault, under sentence of condemnation. See them pursuing their own honour, gain, pleasure; serving their own passions instead of God. Look at these men of every clime under heaven, various in their complexions, of different ranks and states of life: some being born, some dying: some gay, some in mourning: they have to be saved,—how?

The Three Divine Persons take counsel together, on Their heavenly throne. It is the pride of independence that has produced this confusion and misery: self-humiliation must be the remedy. Man would not serve God, so God shall serve man, and the Second Person of the Holy Trinity shall be incarnate and set the example of loving to be unknown and counted nothing worth.

The Angel Gabriel descends to Mary. At once, an Angel imitates the proposed humility of the Second Person and becomes a messenger to a village maiden.

2nd Point.—[Repetition of the *1st* with the addition of the *words* which were said or we may imagine to have been said.]

"Eternal Father, I will become Man and redeem mankind." "My Son, Eternal Son, go forth and save mankind; pride and rebellion have robbed men of everlasting life; Thy self-humiliation shall teach them how to recover Heaven; they shall see Thee, and if they will but follow Thee and imitate Thee, they shall praise Thee anew through all eternity." And the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, "Eternal Father and Eternal Son, this work of Love shall be

wrought in the womb of a spotless daughter of man, one whom I will fit for so august an office. Humility shall be her preparation and she shall refuse nothing which may be to the Divine honour and service."

Meanwhile men on the earth curse and blaspheme: foul conversation is their recreation: violence and falsehood and rage; words of flattery and deceit and levity are heard on all sides. Mary is praying in her cottage: praying for her people, praying for the world, praying for the coming Messias. And Gabriel appears: "Hail, full of grace." And Mary is surprised: Gabriel bids her fear not and announces the Incarnation. "Behold the handmaid."

3rd Point.—The Actions. What characterises all that is done here? The great corrective: the great panacea:—*Love to be unknown and counted nothing worth.* What has seduced men but self-love: love of their own reputation: of being thought well of: of getting a name among and above their fellows: making themselves known rather than making God and His goodness known? Even in those who pretend to serve God, how often does self, self-conceit, the desire of oneself being known and thought well of, mix itself up with what they do for God. Therefore Christ our Lord becomes Man—unknown and little thought of—born of a peasant girl, unknown and counted nothing worth: an obscure carpenter's Foster-Son. Look at Jesus Christ and be sure that what He chooses is best. Therefore be content to be unknown and counted nothing worth. Dread reputation: if it fall to your lot, tremble, for fear it seduce you; if it do not fall to your lot, shun it. If duty require that you do things

which make you talked about, fear; for you are walking on ice and you are surrounded by that which tends to substituting self for God and you may be easily led to seek and take delight in your own praise and honour rather than in God's: you may again fall short of your end, the salvation of your soul. Love then to be unknown and counted nothing worth, *i.e.* by men, by your fellow-creatures around you. What in fact is their praise worth? they do not know you: they only see the surface. Love to be known and thought much of by Jesus Christ your good Master, by the inhabitants of Heaven, by the Angels. And it is by being like Jesus Christ that their good opinion will be secured: become like Jesus Christ: follow Him: imitate Him. Look at Him and become acquainted with Him: become acquainted with Him and grow into His likeness.

Colloquy.—With Mary, our Blessed Lady, that she may win us grace to desire to be like her Son and follow Him as she did.

O Eternal Lord of all things, I, with Thy help and favour, do now, in the Presence of Thy infinite Goodness and in the sight of Thy glorious Mother and of all Thy sons and daughters in the Court of Heaven, make the offering of myself, protesting that it is my wish and desire and that it is my deliberate resolve,—provided it be more to Thy service and to Thy greater honour,—to imitate Thee in bearing all possible ill-treatment and all unjust accusations and all the trials of poverty, actual no less than spiritual, if it be the will of Thy Most Sacred Majesty to choose me to this kind of life and to admit me to it.

Our Father.

FOURTH DAY.—III.

THE NATIVITY.

Poverty.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—God the Father looking down from His heavenly throne sees His Eternal Son, born of a woman; and with the Son and Holy Ghost goes on with the salvation of the men and women whom He sees hurrying to destruction. In the outhouse of the Inn at Bethlehem, the Word made Flesh is born of Mary.

2*nd Preamble.*—Picture to yourself the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem, by hill and dale; through Galilee and Samaria: then, the poor outhouse where God is born of Mary.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant me, O Lord my God, to fix my eyes on the Holy Babe, just born, that I may know Him and knowing, may love Him and imitate Him.

1*st Point.—The Persons.* The Eternal Trinity looking down from Heaven on the wretches who are sinning and on the Holy Family, the beginning of salvation: men and women abandoned to self and sin; ambitious, covetous; while God the Son is born in Poverty. Joseph and an attendant girl: Mary the chosen Mother and Angels looking on.

2*nd Point.—The Words:* the noisy mirth and evil conversations of pagans through the world at the very moment of the Nativity: the wondering exclamations of holy Joseph: the holy ejaculations of our Lady: the songs of Angels and the shudder of evil spirits.

3*rd Point.—The Actions.* And what is being done? That which is fitted to undo the evil of sin. Love of gain, desire of *more*, the self-indulgence of the rich, the grasping of the avaricious and the dishonesties of the poor; the violence of robberies; the frauds of trade; the schemes of money-getting and money-making; all the multitudinous miseries which come from discontented poverty and from riches are met here by the example of Jesus Christ, Who chooses voluntarily to be poor and needy. He is God the Son, and, consequently, *entitled to everything; and yet He claims nothing.* He rejects riches which are the nutriment of pride and self-indulgence; and He embraces Poverty and is content with it. Look at Jesus Christ and learn how to value the things which the world values. Had it been more to His Father's Glory, He would have chosen riches and been born of an Empress: but He knew that riches and the love of riches and the desire of riches and the dread of Poverty and anxiety to escape from

poverty drew men from God, attached their hearts to earthly things, seduced them from devoting themselves to the praise and honour and service of God; and therefore He chose to forego the riches of Heaven, for our sakes became poor and embraced all the painful effects of poverty. Look at Jesus Christ! He is wise, is He not? He is the *Infinite* wisdom. He therefore is not mistaken when He prefers Poverty to riches. Poverty therefore is better than riches: riches are dangerous: Poverty is comparatively secure. We need no other proof than this, namely, *Jesus Christ chose it:* and we look at Him and say that we ought to follow Him; that we mean to follow Him. Let us then at last confess (however unwilling we may be to act upon it) that it is a mistake to value riches; that all things considered—*life everlasting as well as this life*—there is something in Poverty better than in Riches. We cannot but confess this, because Christ has chosen it. But we have said that we ought to follow Him. He loved Poverty; He said, Blessed are the poor: therefore, if we love Him, let us try to think less of riches and honour Poverty more. At any rate let us do nothing wrong for the sake of riches, let us do nothing wrong in order to keep what we have, and should it so happen that God should deprive us of our means, or allow us to be deprived of them in whole or in part, let us be reconciled to the loss, because, so far, we are made a little more like Jesus Christ. And if we have a right to any riches or advantage, let us think it a very great thing if we can even in some little trifles in daily life, *forego our rights,* because—He was entitled to everything and

forewent all His rights and claimed nothing. Indeed, what right have we to anything when we recall our own littleness (as we have before meditated) and have found ourselves to have been like reeking dunghills and foul abscesses welling forth corruption. And let us then love Jesus Christ in His self-chosen Poverty and if He will have it so, let us be prompt and ready to follow Him actually in His Poverty. And let us say at the end of our colloquy with Jesus Christ, the poor Infant of the poor Virgin Mother:

O Eternal Lord and Master of all things I do now, with Thy help and favour, in the Presence of Thy Infinite Goodness and in the sight of Thy glorious Mother and of all the Saints, Thy Sons and Daughters, in the Court of Heaven, make the offering of myself, protesting that it is my wish and desire and that it is my deliberate resolve—provided it be more to Thy service and to Thy greater honour—to imitate Thee in bearing all possible ill-treatment and all unjust accusations and all the trials of poverty, actual no less than spiritual, if it be the Will of thy Most Sacred Majesty to choose me to this kind of life and to admit me to it.

Our Father.

FOURTH DAY.—IV

THE LIFE AT NAZARETH
AND
THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—The Holy Child and the Young Man, Jesus Christ, is obedient to Joseph and Mary at Nazareth; but suspends His obedience to them when His Eternal Father requires it of Him at Jerusalem.

2*nd Preamble.*—Picture to yourself the cottage at Nazareth with its workshop and Mary's spinning-wheel: also the Temple at Jerusalem and the part where Jesus was found.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant me to understand the conduct of my master and pattern Jesus Christ: to love it and to follow Him.

1*st Point.*—The Persons, their words and actions in the Life of Obedience at Nazareth. Jesus the

Eternal Wisdom and Infinite Power, now hiding both under the appearance of childlike ignorance and weakness: Joseph, the illiterate carpenter: Mary, however holy yet infinitely inferior to her Divine Son. God the Father and the Holy Spirit look on and, as it is the Will of the Holy Trinity that children should obey their parents, God the Son made Man does what He is bid. He knows how to handle the tools better than Joseph, yet He does what He is bid. In all commands where there is no sin (and Mary and Joseph could not bid anything sinful) God-made-Man does as He is told, even when He knows how He could do the thing better. Men had fallen short of their end and incurred condemnation for preferring their will to the will of those wiser than themselves—and to the Will of God made known to them by Revelation or by their consciences—and so God the Son practises the perfection of self-denying obedience. All the men and women around, in the pagan world, are setting up their own wills and whims and passions for laws; and Jesus Christ obeys—the Infinite Wisdom is submissive to His own imperfect creatures; and we have said that we will follow Him, that we wish to be like Him: am I then ready to obey: to forego my own will and submit to another's: to give up my own will—when there is no sin in so doing—and acquiesce in another's for the sake of peace with others, for the sake of practising humility, myself?

O most lowly and Divine Child! O Son of God and Son of Mary: open my eyes to the terrible dangers of self-will and make me long to understand

the wisdom of Thy obedience and to imitate it. Let me be always ready to forego my own will for the sake of others unless the honour of God require the contrary.

2nd Point.—The Holy Child without His parents' leave stays at Jerusalem because such was the Will of His Eternal Father.

Jesus obeyed Mary and Joseph because they represented to Him His Eternal Father and in obeying them He obeyed Him. And on the same ground we obey our parents and superiors. It is possible for our parents and superiors to require of us that which is contrary to the will of our Eternal Father. If so, they thereby lose their authority and we are bound not to obey them. But sometimes, short of this, they may be ignorant of the Will of the Eternal Father with regard to us and that Will may, by some means, be made known to us. When this happens, we are still bound to follow the bidding of God, though it may surprise and give pain to our parents. Such was the case with the Holy Child when twelve years old. He had obeyed His parents in accompanying them to Jerusalem, but when they left Jerusalem, He without their knowledge remained behind because He knew it to be His Eternal Father's Will. He knew Mary and Joseph would be sorely pained and filled with anxiety —Mary ever had before her mind the "sword" foretold by Simeon—and the tender Heart of the Holy Child was rent in twain by sorrow for giving sorrow to His Mother: but it was His Eternal Father's Will—and He will obey it because His

Eternal Father could only will and require what is good.

Here then is a Law higher than the ordinary law; a Law that perfects and raises to higher perfection the common law: the Law of the Counsels as contrasted with the Law of the Commandments: and, where God invites to the Counsels, it is His good pleasure that human ties and human affections shall give way to the vocation which unites men more intimately with Himself and which, while it supplants human and natural ties, elevates human and natural affections and intensifies them. For Jesus Christ loves our parents a thousand times more than we do: and the more we are like Him, the more we shall love them as He does: our affections for them will be less earthly and more heavenly: less natural and more spiritual: less merely human and more divino-human—like Jesus Christ's.

Therefore, O Lord Jesus Christ, speak for Thy servant heareth. If Thou wilt have me serve Thee in the Precepts alone, my heart is ready: Thy will be done! If Thou call me to the practice of the Counsels; my heart, O Lord, is ready: I desire to be like Thee and to imitate Thee.

O Eternal Lord of all things, I, with Thy help and favour, do now, in the Presence of Thy infinite Goodness and in the sight of Thy glorious Mother and of all the Saints, Thy Sons and Daughters, in the Court of Heaven, make the offering of myself, protesting that it is my wish and desire and that it is my deliberate resolve—provided it be more to Thy service and to Thy greater honour—to imitate

Thee in bearing all possible ill-treatment and all unjust accusations and all the trials of poverty, actual no less than spiritual, if it be the Will of Thy Most Sacred Majesty to choose me to this kind of life and to admit me to it.

Our Father.

FIFTH DAY.—I

THE TWO STANDARDS.

Pride and Humility.

Those who have listened to the call of Christ and chosen to follow Him, will not be let alone by Lucifer. He will practise his cunning on them to get them back: Christ will try to fortify them in good. Lucifer will picture a fictitious happiness to be gained by riches and honours: a happiness which can last only for a time and through the Pride which it fosters, will entail everlasting ruin. Christ proposes eternal and, therefore, true life, and shows how poverty and low estate help to secure it. Consequently, Lucifer will urge his minions to egg men on to pursue riches and honours, things in themselves indifferent, but tending to make men proud; those who follow Christ are to be persuaded to love poverty and low estate and they will grow humble: in fine, "I will follow Christ" is equivalent to—"I will be humble."

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—The history, namely, how Christ would have His followers behave, and how Lucifer would have his.

2*nd Preamble*—Picture to yourself the vast plain in which Jerusalem is situated, with Christ our Lord the Chief Captain of the good, there: and the other plain in the land of Babylon with Lucifer, the Ring-leader of the enemy.

3*rd Preamble*—Grant my petition, O Lord; that I may see through the deceits of Lucifer, and set me on my guard against them: grant that I may esteem the true life that Christ makes known and give me grace to imitate Him.

1*st Point.*—See the two leaders: see Lucifer who is indeed a monster such as sin has made an angel; hideous, loathsome, terrible: see him on his seat of fire and smoke, full of malice and bent on spiting Jesus Christ and ruining His followers: and see also Jesus Christ our Lord in the vast plain around Jerusalem with every circumstance of humility, fair and amiable to look on.

2*nd Point.*—See how each has his instruments,—Lucifer, his foul and evil spirits; Christ, His Apostles and Disciples. Lucifer sends evil spirits into every corner of the world, to every region and city and dwelling, leaving out no one single individual: and Christ sends His disciples and apostles throughout the whole world to teach His sacred doctrine.

3*rd Point.*—Listen to the instructions given by both to those whom they employ. Lucifer bids his emissaries beware of startling those whom they

assail. They would be thrown on their guard by a gross temptation. They have studied the hideousness of sin and have abandoned it: they will not be seduced if sin is at once proposed to them in its real colours. He bids his minions approach like angels of light: he bids them suggest objects which while they are attractive, are in themselves perfectly indifferent, perfectly innocent,—in fact, such things as no one could say that there is any harm in them. He bids them put the conveniences of an easy position before the men they are to seduce; the comforts of a competency, the advantages of possessing money. Of course there is no harm in this; on the contrary, money may be used for most pious purposes: it is absolutely necessary for the corporal works of mercy: it is also necessary to save oneself from a number of anxieties which interfere with one's peace of mind. Therefore, be glad if you have got money: if not, set to work to get it.

Such is the net by which Lucifer bids his emissaries entrap souls.

And the consequences of listening to them are perilous, for the man who has money is made much of; he is courted and flattered; he learns to feel his power and influence. Money is the high-road in this world to compliments and respect from men around us: the possession of money leads to the possession of our neighbours' deference: money leads to our being courted: money leads to honour. Reflect on the history of a poor artisan who suddenly becomes by inheritance a millionaire: what will probably be his history? He who was overlooked and had nothing around him to make him think much of

himself, becomes the object of admiration, respect, deference. His former state contributed to his having a low opinion of himself, now everything around him suggests to him that he is somebody—all tends to foster pride: and where pride is, there is the danger of falling into all kinds of follies and sins.

So Lucifer's standard has, written upon it, Money: and money which is so innocent, so useful, becomes the lure to lead men though Honour to Pride, and so to ruin.

But Jesus Christ, what is His teaching? It is the opposite to that of Lucifer. Lucifer eggs his minions on to rouse the love of money in men; Christ will have His Apostles inspire men with esteem for Poverty. Blessed are the poor in spirit. They are to warn men against the frauds of Lucifer and to show them how riches, however indifferent in themselves or even useful, become the occasion of danger by obtaining Honour for their possessors and then puffing them up with Pride. On the contrary, absence of riches excludes the flattering deference of our fellow-men and so, the exterior occasions for fomenting a good opinion of oneself are removed. The poor man is less likely to be flattered and so, less likely to take airs to himself. The very world would laugh at the beggar who did so. If then we wish to place ourselves in a position of advantage towards becoming like Jesus Christ, *i.e.*, towards becoming humble, we must esteem poverty and regard the rich as in danger and the poor as more in the way of becoming like Jesus Christ: and therefore conclude that we too must be either

actually poor, or nourish the lowly *spirit* of the poor man in our hearts, if we would follow and be like Jesus Christ: if we would be humble. Poverty secures for its possessor humiliations from the world: and absence of the world's admiration will tend to produce the spirit of humble dependence on God: and thus as the three steps on Lucifer's side were, Money, Honour, Pride: so on the side of Jesus Christ they are, Poverty, Humiliations, Humility.

In a number of other points Lucifer tries to cheat the servants of God and seduce them unwittingly from His service. As soon as we pursue a thing of which the best that can be said is: Oh! there's no harm in it! we should regard it with suspicion. There's no harm, it is said, in balls, in the play, in gossiping, in flirtation, in reading novels, in such a person's company, in reading Protestant books and newspapers or periodicals; in paying attention to dress; in a good dinner; in a good glass of wine; in smoking; in betting; in playing cards, in playing for money, in getting settled in the world; in being alone with people: in visiting such a "good and holy person;" if our only allegeable ground for doing any of these things is that there's no harm in them, it is time to suspect them or ourselves.

Colloquy.—O Mary, Mother of Jesus, our Sweet Lady, win me grace from thy Son and Lord, never to be seduced from His Standard: to be indeed poor in spirit: to be ready to give up all I have, if it be best for me, willingly to bear contempt and obloquy and all ill-treatment (if this may be without

offence to the Divine Majesty), in order that I may be like Him, humble.

Hail Mary.

O Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, win for me this grace from Thy Eternal Father.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

O Eternal Father, grant me my petition: make me humble like Thy Son, by loving Poverty and Humiliations.

Our Father.

FIFTH DAY.—II.

THREE KINDS OF MEN.

Since "following Christ," or "being like Christ," means "being humble," and the only road to humility is by humiliations, we must wish for humiliations. But there are various ways of wishing and only one is to the purpose: we must be in earnest.

"*I wish* to be humble;" what does "*I wish*" mean?

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1st Preamble.—There are three couples or pairs of men, partners in business, who have by traffic amassed £10,000. Somehow they feel themselves less fervent in God's service than before they possessed this sum of money, and each several couple enters into a conversation as to what they had better do in order that they may serve peacefully and without anxiety God our Lord.

2nd Preamble.—To consider myself standing in the Presence of our Lord God and of all His Saints.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me grace, O my God, to choose that which is most to the glory of Thy Divine Majesty and the salvation of my soul.

1st Point.—The first pair enter into conversation about the matter. They *wish* to save their souls and to prevent their £10,000 from being an hindrance to it. They talk and they agree that something ought to be done and go on talking in the same strain, *without taking any measures* whatever to do anything. This first pair does not *wish* as they ought: they are not *in earnest.*

The second pair discuss the matter more seriously; they *wish* to secure their salvation and to do with the £10,000 that which is best towards that end. They consider various means of turning the £10,000 into a help towards their salvation instead of a hindrance to it. They discuss the means but they have a *preconceived plan* in their own heads which prevents their judging aright, or they have *reserves* which must be respected. This second pair does not *wish* as they ought: they are not in *earnest.*

The third pair enter into the discussion and they *wish* to save their souls and not to suffer hindrance through the wealth that they possess: they examine the reasons on every side; they give to all their due weight: they shut their eyes to nothing: they have no preconceived plan: they have no reserves. Should it appear that they ought to keep their money in whole or in part they are ready to do so: should it appear necessary for the good of their souls to part with it, they are ready. They only consider what is most to the glory of God, for that

will also be most for their soul's good. They set so light by their riches, that they are already in heart and affection separated from them, and the actual renunciation of them will not cost them a pang. This third pair *does wish* as they ought: *they are in earnest.*

2nd Point.—The same earnestness or want of earnestness may be illustrated by a broken limb. Three men meet with the same accident: they break an arm. The same advice is given to all, namely, that the arm must be amputated or mortification will ensue. The first wishes to save his life and goes on wishing without taking any measures: the second wishes to save his life and will submit to anything but amputation: the third wishes to save his life and sends at once for the surgeon. The third only was in earnest in his wish: the two first die, the last recovers. He only is in earnest who, while wishing for the end, wishes also the necessary means.

3rd Point.—On *wishing* to be *humble.* Do I really wish it? Wishing has various meanings, varying from the bare velleïty to the deliberate resolve. The roué *wishes* to be happy: the Young Man in the Gospel *wished* to be perfect, and the Saints have *wished* for salvation and perfection. Is mine the right kind of wishing? Am I *in earnest* in my wishing? If so, I wish the means as well as the end: I wish not merely Humility but the means to it. Now the Two Standards have shown me that the way to Humility is Humiliations; and the way to Humiliations is by Poverty: we cannot become humble without humiliations, we shall not meet with

humiliations unless we are poor. If then I wish really and in earnest for Humility, I wish to be overlooked, thought little of, thrust aside, to have others preferred to me, to be placed or left in an inferior position, to be underrated: to be unknown and counted nothing worth: and this in spite of the world which calls all this meanness and poverty of spirit. So indeed it is poverty of spirit in Christ's sense. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is—not the honour of the world or the good opinion of the world, but—the Kingdom of Heaven. This was chosen by Jesus Christ: am I *like Him* in choosing as he did? Yet all stands in being like Jesus Christ.

Colloquy.—O Mary, obtain for me from thy Son and Lord, perseverance under His standard: obtain for me the true spirit of Poverty, the lowly and retiring spirit of the poor, and if nature rebels against it, beseech our Lord God to send me what my nature shrinks from, the painful humiliations which may be necessary for me.

Hail Mary.

O Jesus, Lord and Master, help me to persevere among Thy soldiers under Thy standard,—the standard of Poverty, Humiliations, Humility; obtain this grace for me from Thy Eternal Father

Soul of Christ, p. 32.

O Eternal Father, keep me under the Standard of Thy Son. In spite of my repugnance, send me such humiliations as may be necessary to form in me Humility, so that I may grow into the likeness of thy Divine Son.

Our Father.

FIFTH DAY.—III.

THE TEMPTATION OF OUR LORD.

The temptations of our Blessed Lord exhibit to us in their order the temptations used by Lucifer: first, riches; then honour; then the pride which stands in rebellion against God, and consequent slavery to the Evil One. Had it been possible for our Lord to have yielded, He would have yielded to the temptations one after another in this, their natural order.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History:* How Lucifer proposes to our Lord means towards attaining the object He had in view, means which seemed indifferent or innocent, but which were not indeed the means approved by God.

2*nd Preamble.*—Picture to yourself the banks of the Jordan, the desolate waste, the pinnacle of the Temple, the mountain summit.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, to see through the deceits of the Tempter, and put me on my guard against them, that I may instinctively shrink from his suggestions, and refuse to give way to them; that I may understand the conduct of Jesus Christ and admire Him and follow Him.

1st Point.—Our Lord is a-hungered and Lucifer, in the form of a traveller meeting our Lord as though by chance, as one who had seen Him on the banks of the Jordan, and had heard John's testimony concerning Him, bids Him save Himself from starvation by a miracle. Surely there is no harm in this! But, Jesus is the Son of God made Man, and has taken on Him all man's weaknesses, and if He has been *led by the Spirit* into the wilderness, *i.e.*, exposed by His Father to hunger in the desert, His Father will take care of Him, and it would argue want of confidence, if He had recourse to extraordinary means without the express direction of His Father. So He answers, that man depends not on the material food, but on the Law and Providence of God, and so baffles the Tempter. And the seeming traveller goes on his way.

The inconveniences of Poverty must not induce men to adopt means unapproved by God. Perhaps it is God's will that I should be poor: perhaps on my being poor may depend my salvation or at any rate the bestowal on me by God of great graces. Let me not be in a hurry to escape from the straits of poverty, if I find myself in them. Though there may be "no harm" in trying to extricate myself from them, it may be more to God's glory and my

soul's good to bear them patiently and exercise my energies in other ways. When a man is in Religious Life and has embraced poverty, it is plain that he ought not to try to make money in order to become rich and to surround himself with comforts. Something of the same kind may occur with men still in the world. It may be far better for them not to get into easier circumstances than they are in now. They may lose ground if they do: they may pass from the step of riches to the step of honour and gradually drift off into Pride. For the second temptation is worldly honour.

2nd Point.—Christ on the summit of the Temple. Cast Thyself down, says the Angel: for the Tempter has taken the form of an Angel, an Angel of Light, and has borne Jesus Christ to the Pinnacle of the Temple. Lucifer professes to respect the character of Jesus: he speaks to Him as designated by the Baptist as a Prophet, and he says to Him: See the people down below; the people Thou art come to teach and to call to penance and the service of God: see them crowding the threshold of the house of God, and they are looking forward to the coming of some Great One. Cast Thyself down: float through the air in their sight from the height of the Temple's roof—the Angels of God will hold Thee up—and prove Thyself by Thy marvellous descent the Prophet to Whom they are to listen and Whom they are to obey. They will honour Thee and hear Thy word.

A temptation to seek the honour and admiration of men under the appearance of good! But this was not the way chosen by His Eternal Father, and the act would be presumption: Thou shalt not tempt

the Lord thy God. No self-invented extraordinary measures: there may seem to be "no harm" in them; but they are not God's way and we will have none of them.

3rd Point.—Thou wouldst reduce the world under Thy teaching: what prospect is there? Thou, a poor Carpenter, living in obscurity at Nazareth. Accept my aid: I have power to help Thee. I am an Angel, and to the Angels has been committed the care of kingdoms and peoples: I am he to whom the supreme command of all has been committed: I am the spiritual prince of this world. Acknowledge me as such, and I will put all under Thy power, and Thy task is done. If the Almighty has subjected the world to me, it is but reasonable that Thou shouldst acknowledge my authority and bow before me. Bow before me and fulfil Thy work.

But never did good Angel claim honour for himself. Every Angel of Light has his Master's honour at heart and the claim of Lucifer proves him to be the prince of pride and the ringleader of the children of pride, who rebel against the Lord their God. So Jesus Christ exposes the miserable impostor: Get thee hence, for thou art Satan, God's enemy and Mine, and the enemy of mankind! Get thee hence, and let all honour and praise and adoration be paid where it is due! Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve. So Jesus baffled the temptation to pride, and behold, Angels came, true holy Angels, and ministered to Him: and when it was His Father's Will that He should refresh Himself with miraculous

food, there was no longer difficulty, but Humility itself would lead Him to use it.

O Mary, Mother and Lady, pray for me that I may be on my guard against the deceits of the enemy: that I may ever walk in the plain way of God's declared will and never venture on extraordinary courses which are open to delusion and to pride. Win me grace to love Poverty with Christ Who was poor, rather than riches: and since my nature rebels against poverty and contempt, yet may my Lord and Master choose them for me, if it be for His service and honour, however difficult it may be for me to exercise perfect indifference.

Hail Mary.

O my dear Lord and Master, ask Thy Eternal Father to bestow this grace upon me.

Soul of Christ, p. 32.

O Eternal Father, grant me this grace, that I may be more like Thy Son, made Man for me.

Our Father.

FIFTH DAY.—IV

CANA.

The humble are always amiable: they are strict with themselves but full of considerateness for others. They regard others as better than themselves, and put themselves to inconvenience to do kindnesses to others.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* The Marriage at Cana. Jesus and Mary and some lately called to be disciples are present: the young couple are poor, their wine fails them. Mary intercedes for them, and for His Mother's sake Jesus Christ hastens the pre-ordained time of His manifestation.

2*nd Preamble.*—The Marriage Feast: Jesus at table: Mary serving: the assembled guests.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord, that I may know the amiability no less than the humility of Jesus and may imitate it in my daily life.

1st *Point.—The Persons.* Mary, a mere creature: Jesus, God-Man. The Eternal Father has fixed the time for the first miracle which His Son is to work. Lucifer had urged Jesus to anticipate that time and he was repelled. Mary intercedes to the same effect, that He may do a kindness. Jesus expresses His amazement (if we might so speak) at His Mother's request, and yet, as He did of old with Moses, after remonstrating at the creature's interference with the Divine Decrees ("Let Me alone!" "What have I to do with thee?") He acquiesces in His Mother's Prayer. Consider the Persons: the *absolutely* Omnipotent, and the All-powerful in *Prayer;* Jesus and Mary. And yet the miracle is comparatively secret. Not before the assembled world, Pagan or Jewish, but only "the servants knew" and "His disciples," the few yet with Him, "believed in Him." So Humility accompanies even His first exercise of miraculous power.

2nd *Point.—The Words.* The Eternal Father in His Eternity decrees the time of the manifestation of His Son, subject however in the Secret of His Counsels, as the event proved, to the contingency, whether *Mary* would interfere and intercede and pray. Wonderful Providence and Predestination! "They have no wine:" Mary *does* interfere and intercede. Her *charity* moves her to overcome her retiredness: and her charity (inspired indeed by her Son) finds a corresponding chord in the Heart of Jesus. Yet the Eternal Decree has to be considered: how shall Mary's prayer reverse the utterance of the Most High. Well may her Divine Son say, when His Father's Will seems at variance with His

Mother's will and prayer—what have I to do with thee? On a former occasion, there had occurred something which looked similar (but was not really) and *then* He had said, Knew ye not that I must be about My Father's business: and then He had preferred His Father's Will (because it was absolute) and had given pain to His Mother. Now, His Father's Will is conditional: Mary intercedes for charity's sake: it is for the sake of the poor: to spare the feelings of the young pair just married: His "Father's business" is not hindered if He acquiesces: it is only hastened a brief time; and the miracle is granted, the miracle being far less the change of water into wine than the gracious change of the Divine predestination.

3rd Point.—The Actions: what is done here that I may imitate? When others make requests of me which *interfere with my preconcerted* plans, I must not, if I would imitate the humble charity of Jesus at once reject them. It may be to God's greater glory and service, if I acquiesce. *Compassionateness* was a characteristic of my Master, it ought to be of me. To enter into the feelings and wants of others though they may be dissimilar to my own. Jesus felt for the married couple; and I must try to throw myself into the circumstances of others and be glad to help and relieve them. To imagine myself suffering what such or such a poor man —or sick man—or anxious man suffers, and how I should wish him to act towards me, if we were to change places. Or, again, to remember that what annoys me may annoy others, and not throw off from myself on them, burdens or distasteful employ-

ments. Again, not to be *stiff* in carrying out my plans: to be ready to modify and change for others' sakes, if charity requires: to be pliant and yielding, while, where conscience requires, I am unbending and determined. To enter into the innocent joys of others and not damp them by ill-placed gravity: for Jesus Christ joined the marriage-supper and took His disciples with Him and even contributed to the happiness of the party by supplying wine, when the stock provided had been exhausted. By profoundest humility and self-abasement in my inmost heart—for this I learned in the first Week of the Exercises—and manifestations of kindliest charity, considerateness, compassion, active cooperation in doing good, acquiescence in others' wishes and requests, a disposition always to be doing good and making others happy and most of all those *who are nearest and dearest to me*—for they are the people towards whom it is hardest to be uniformly kind and gentle, and considerateness towards them is therefore most pleasing to God,—in these ways, if I look well at Jesus Christ and lovingly follow Him, I shall live to God's glory and my soul's salvation.

Colloquy.—Mary, most dear Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, win for me from thy Son a heart like His: win for me a lowly, meek and gentle spirit, always ready to give up my own will in order to make others happy: thou wast like thy Son in the practice of this charity: may I imitate Him as thou didst.

Hail Mary.

O my Lord Jesus Christ, obtain for me from the Eternal Father a heart like Thine, full of meekness,

humility and charity: Thy one desire was to do good to others: may it be mine.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

O Eternal Father grant me a heart like that of Thy Eternal Son: self-denying, self-renouncing and willing to make all sacrifices for the sake of charity and of those around me.

Our Father.

SIXTH DAY.—I.

THREE KINDS OF HUMILITY.

To be like Christ at all, we must be humble; but there are three ways of being humble: What are they? "I wish *to be humble*:" What does *to be humble* mean?

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—I see some following Jesus Christ at a distance, some closer, some quite close as His dearest friends and I long to know how I may become one of these last.

2*nd Preamble.*—I stand before Jesus Christ listening to His teaching.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord Jesus Christ, that I may know what Thou didst choose, that, in order to be like Thee, I may choose it too.

1*st Point.*—There are three ways of being humble; not clashing with each other, but capable

of existing together and differing from each other in perfection. One, the least perfect, is necessary to salvation, for to set oneself up against the Will of God is pride and there must, for salvation, be at least so much humility as will prevent a man seriously entertaining the thought of wilfully committing deadly sin: the third, the highest, admits of degrees and our Blessed Lady herself cannot rise above the perfection of this third.

The first kind is that by which a man will so submit his will to the Will of God as not on any consideration, seriously to entertain the deliberate thought of committing deadly sin: the second is to be of the same mind with regard to venial sin: the third does not consider sin at all, but submits itself to the will of Christ so entirely as to choose what He chose without reserve.

These three kinds may be compared with reference to the good things of this life: the first would not for all the world could give or the flesh enjoy, seriously entertain the deliberate thought of sinning grievously: the second would not under the same circumstances, seriously entertain the deliberate thought of sinning venially: the third is not moved or influenced by the good things of the world or the pleasures of the flesh, it prefers—out of love for Jesus Christ and the desire to be like Him—obscurity, poverty, pain and this world's contempt and rejoices in the likeness these produce to Jesus Christ. It prefers earthly shame and poverty unless God disapprove.

Again: For all the pain the world can threaten or inflict, nay, to avoid death itself, he who has the

first kind of humility will not seriously entertain the thought of sinning mortally: not for all the pain the world can threaten or inflict, will he who has the second kind of humility, seriously entertain the thought of sinning venially: as to him who is in the third kind of humility, so far from pain and shame in this life influencing him to sin, he rejoices in them for Jesus Christ's sake Who for his sake embraced them and preferred them to their contraries.

It may further be remarked that he who is in the first kind of humility does indeed prefer earthly goods, though he will not sacrifice eternal salvation for them: he who is in the second is indifferent to earthly goods, more or less, according to the perfection of his humility: he who is in the third, prefers earthly humiliations and poverty, because Christ did so.

2nd Point.—These three kinds of humility may coexist. If the more perfect exist the less perfect must exist, though the existence of the less perfect does not imply the existence of the more perfect. Any pretence to the most perfect without the existence of the two others, would prove the pretended third kind, spurious. Yet men may be found who profess the third kind of humility and yet do not reject at once deliberate thoughts of sinning either venially or grievously. This is presumption and very far indeed from being true Humility. And whatever progress a man may have made, let him never think that he need not concern himself about the first and second kinds, for saints are capable of falling, and carelessness about the first and second

kinds will never be indulged by a really earnest servant of God.

3rd Point.—The third kind of Humility is, in its perfection, so high that Mary herself cannot surpass it, and yet each in his degree is able to practise it. Mary and the Saints possessed it *habitually*, we can at least make *acts* of it: Mary and the Saints practised most sublime acts of it, we can practise acts of it in every day life, and while we are most anxious never to fail as to the first and second kinds, we ought sometimes at least to welcome pain or suffering simply out of love of being like Jesus Christ. To take a few examples:

I have a headache: if I wish to practise an act of the first kind of humility, I may say; O my God, I will not complain; I accept this pain and offer it up to Thee in penance for the past *grievous* sins in my former life: if I wish to make an act of the second kind of humility, I may say; O my God, I will not complain; I accept this pain and offer it up to Thee in penance for my daily venial faults: or I may make an act of the third kind, and without referring at all to my sins, I may say, O my Lord Jesus Christ, I am suffering, and Thou didst suffer: by suffering, if only I suffer patiently, I become like Thee, and this is the one desire of my heart: I am grateful that I am suffering: the flesh rebels and would fain be relieved, but so long as it is Thy will that I should suffer, I accept it gratefully, and unite this pain which my head suffers with the pain that Thou didst suffer from the Crown of Thorns. It should further be remembered that all three kinds may be practised together, and that there may

coexist the three-fold intention of offering up pain or mortification for past grievous sins, and actual daily faults and imperfections, and in union with the sufferings of Christ.

Other examples may be :

I am undeservedly found fault with.

I have a disagreeable task assigned me.

My food is ill dressed.

My fondest schemes and plans are disappointed.

Others are preferred before me.

I am kept back from posts of distinction.

I break down in an undertaking.

Colloquy.—O Mary, win for me from thy Divine Son the firm purpose of never deliberately entertaining the thought of sinning either grievously or venially : win for me the grace to desire shame and poverty in this world rather than riches and honour, because thy Son preferred them : and ask Him to impose them on me, if it be good for me, however much my poor weak nature may shrink from them : only may He give me grace too, to bear them patiently with Him.

Hail Mary.

O my Lord Jesus Christ, ask Thy Eternal Father to bestow this grace upon me.

Soul of Christ, p. 32.

O Eternal Father, fulfil this desire which my understanding approves as being best for me, for my everlasting salvation : make me like Thy Son in the three kinds of Humility.

Our Father.

SIXTH DAY.—II.

THE SELLERS IN THE TEMPLE.

Our Blessed Lord, Who was all gentleness, meek and humble of heart towards all who were of good heart, could not brook any insult to His Father's glory. He Who compassionated the penitent and contrite; He Who felt for the distress of the young married couple at Cana, acted with a holy indignation against those who profaned His Father's House at the Passover at the opening of His Public Life.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* Our Blessed Lord going up to Jerusalem at the Pasch finds sellers in the Temple: He makes a scourge of cords and drives them all out: He overturns the tables and the piles of coin of the rich money-changers who were in the Temple, and to the poor dove-sellers says gently, "Take these things hence, and do not make my Father's House a house of traffic."

2*nd Preamble.*—Figure to yourself the Temple: its Courts and Holy Places.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me grace, O Lord, to understand the conduct of my Lord that I may learn to love Him and follow His example.

1st Point.—The Persons. The Eternal Trinity in Heaven watching the outset of the Public Ministry of our Lord: the whole world sinning and pressing onwards to ruin, unconscious of the great work beginning: the Priests and leaders of the Jews astonished at the intruder: Jesus in holy indignation but distinguishing between the different classes of offenders: the rich money-changers and the poor bird-sellers.

2nd Point.—The Words. The Holy Trinity;—"Let us begin now in earnest the work of salvation. Let the Divine honour be the first thing vindicated: and let men learn the grievousness of intruding earthly desires and worldly traffic into the sanctuary." Jesus Christ;—Listen to His words of holy indignation: listen to the blows He inflicts with the scourge which He has made: listen to the coin rattling on the pavement: the words of Jesus to the dove-sellers: the fluttering of the birds: and in all this learn that it is not always well to be quiet: that occasions present themselves when we are bound to speak out, to lift up our voices and, for the honour of God and the sake of our neighbour, denounce the world and its practices, its maxims and its profanity.

3rd Point.—It is cowardice to be silent when God's honour is, in our presence, attacked, and our voice can be of service in vindicating it. Of course, prudence ought to guide us, but there is danger of

indulging pusillanimity under the plea of prudence. Who would say, at first sight, that the act of our Blessed Lord was in this case characterized by prudence? We know that it was prudent, because we know He could do nothing imprudent: but to those around it would seem imprudent and He was challenged to show His authority. At another time too it is said that some remarked of Him that He was beside Himself. There are cases where a little imprudence is the greatest prudence: where logical enunciation of what is right would do no good and something like passionate denunciation alone will make itself heard. With some people we must "have no patience." The smooth tongued half-and-half Catholics who take for granted the propriety of unenthusiastic time-servingness will never be roused from their own apathy by mere reason, and to prevent their indifference from spreading, a little zeal and earnestness must be the spice to aid true reason and right honesty to hold their own. And this may be at the expense of the speaker: he may get the credit of being intemperate and over-zealous and enthusiastic: and he must share this reproach with his Master.

But in reality, if we are humble and feel our *unworthiness* to speak in our Master's cause, our zeal and enthusiasm will never be *indiscriminate* or *unguided* by Reason. As our Blessed Lord distinguished between the rich bankers and the poor bird-sellers, so shall we distinguish between the time-servers and half-hearted who ought to know better, and those who however misguided are in fact *guided* amiss and are not the authors or leaders in

evil. These are misled, mistaken, but they have not the malice of the others. Had they been better taught, they would have been as earnest for the right as they are now earnest for indifference: they are at least well-meaning and there is hope for them. But they must be waked up, and burning words against time-serving, and kind remonstrances and earnest expostulations, may make them fervent in Christ's service, and faithful and devoted children of His Vicar on earth.

Colloquy.—O Mary who heardest of thy Son's visit to the Temple and knewest that all He did was guided by infinite Wisdom: pray for me that I may be content to be counted a fool and a fanatic for Christ's sake, provided only I do nothing really foolishly or fanatically: win for me the grace of Christian prudence which to the world will often appear folly and madness: I would be like Thy Son, Jesus Christ.

Hail Mary.

O Lord Jesus Christ, my Master and Lord, win for me grace of Thy Eternal Father: may the zeal of Thy House and Church consume me.

Soul of Christ, p. 32.

O Eternal Father, Lord of the Temple and of the Church, grant me perfect faith and deep humility: and though I am unworthy to speak on Thy behalf, yet, when Thy Glory requires it, give me a bold and courageous tongue, careless of the world's good opinion and desirous only of Thy approval. Oh, give me grace to know Thy Son and follow Him.

Our Father.

SIXTH DAY.—III.

CHRIST STILLS THE TEMPEST.

In the service of God there are times of trouble and desolation: they occur in various ways and for various reasons. But Jesus Christ is still with us as He was with His disciples in the Storm, and He will restore peace.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* As Christ our Lord was sleeping in the ship, there arose a storm: His disciples, imperfect in their faith, rouse Him from sleep. He chides them: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" and then He commands the wind and the sea, and to the amazement of those who witnessed it there was a great calm.

2*nd Preamble.*—Picture to yourself the sea of Tiberias; the ship; the distant shores and the cushion on which Jesus rested His Sacred Head.

3rd Preamble.—Grant, O Lord, that I may understand Thy dealings with Thy servants, that I may never be discouraged.

1st Point.—The Persons. The disciples are tempest-tossed: they do not feel the protection of their Master: Jesus is asleep and seems at once helpless and regardless of their danger. Jesus though asleep is still watching over them; allowing them to be tried but ready to relieve their fears and anxieties, as soon as He sees it to be best for them.

2nd Point.—The Words. Lord, save us, we perish! Dost Thou not care for us? Seest Thou not the danger we are in? Help us, Lord, if Thou canst. Why are you fearful? Where is your faith? Know ye not that I am with you and you have reason to confide in Me? Have you ever had reason to mistrust Me? Oh, wonderful, the winds and sea obey His voice! He speaks and there is a calm. Surely we will trust in Thee.

3rd Point.—The Actions. God lets His servants be assailed with storm and tempest. They learn and understand their own helplessness, and when, in the time of need, they call on Him and He hears them, they learn the more to praise Him, to revere Him and, adoring His holy will, to conform their wills to His.

Who has not experienced desolation? And for various reasons God may permit it. Sometimes, we grow careless and neglect our morning meditations and our confessions and communions; and we throw ourselves more than we ought into worldly society and pleasures and exterior occupations. We

have no time for visits to the Blessed Sacrament: we are up so late at night, we were absorbed in study or an interesting book or conversation, we cannot get to Mass in the morning: we are less kind and considerate towards our neighbours, we judge them harshly, we neglect works of mercy and charity: we spend money on dress or luxuries: we are grown lukewarm: what wonder if our God, like a prudent *father*, whose son is growing careless and idle, shows reserve and coolness to us, in order to bring us to our senses? When this happens, desolation and deadness in devotion is a kind of penance graciously imposed on us by our good God. Again, God would sometimes teach us how we are progressing and, as a *mother* teaching her child to walk may withdraw her hand for a moment, to see whether the child can go alone, so God may try us and withdraw His sensible consolations to see whether we will go on, faithful to Him, even without the sweets of His holy service. Again, God may wish to remind us that consolation is wholly out of our power to create, and that it depends simply on His Bounty, and so, He may withdraw it, to teach the entire dependence of the creature on the *Creator*.

And we must bear it patiently: not only patiently but contritely, if we can trace it to our own fault: but never despondently, for God permits it for our greater good. There is a cloud over the sun, but the sun is shining on the other side of the cloud and in good time the cloud will blow over. Only let us insist more than at other times on putting God's Presence before us, on examining ourselves whether and wherein we have offended, and on making

humble acts of contrition and of penance. Then though sorrow may last through the night, joy shall come in the morning, and when we cry on our Master, "Lord, save me or I perish!" "Lord, if I leave or lose Thee, to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of everlasting life:" "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief:" then shall our Master (though He may chide us for our little faith) save us from being swallowed up in the waters: He will at least keep us from drowning as He did Peter when he began to sink, and when the fitting moment is come, He will say to the blasts and winds of temptation, Peace, be still! and there shall be a great calm.

Colloquy.—O Mary Mother, thou hast known sorrow: when my soul is in trouble I will come and hide my face in thy lap, and thou shalt pray for me to thy Son and win for me resignation, contrition and deliverance.

Hail Mary.

O Jesus, Master, have mercy on me: obtain from Thy Eternal Father for me the gift of faith.

Soul of Christ, p. 32.

O Eternal Father, I believe, even in the darkness of desolation: increase my faith! confirm my faith! Be near me and I am safe.

Our Father.

SIXTH DAY.—IV. (*a*)

HOW TO CHOOSE AS GOD WOULD HAVE US CHOOSE.

Whether it be in the matter of a course of life or the events of the day, we have constantly to make a choice between two things: we may make a good choice or a bad one. How are we to choose as God would have us choose?

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—All to the Greater Glory of God.

2*nd Preamble.*—Imagine yourself standing in the presence of God, with the Angels of God and your Guardian Angel and Patron Saints looking on, and yourself called upon to decide an alternative.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord my God, that I may learn how to come to a good choice and give me courage always to make it.

1*st Point.*—"How shall I wish to have chosen when I come to die?" Here is one tolerably certain way of making a good choice,—to think how I shall wish to have chosen when I am on my death-bed. At that time, things will appear in their true value. The pleasures and gains and honours which this world can give will be seen to be passing and treacherous: the annoyances, the poverty, the pains of this world too will be seen to be transitory and not worth comparing with the pains and punishments of those who make a bad choice. It is attachment to creatures which endangers us and tends to lead us to a bad choice: the nearness of death will make us feel the unprofitableness of creatures in themselves, except so far as we use them to the praise and honour, and in the service of God. What shall I wish to have done now when the Angel of death is at hand and has entered my room and is on the point of laying his hand upon me? I have to choose perhaps a state of life: shall I wish then to have chosen the state of life which suited my own whim and fancy or that which after quietly balancing the reasons on either side, during a retreat, appears to have the better reasons on its behalf,—which appears to be the course which God's Providence leads me to,—which approves itself most to my judgment and conscience,—which is recommended to me by the wise counsel of those more prudent and far-seeing than myself? Oh, terrible, if at the point of death I find that through wilfulness or impulse or rashness, I chose that which entangled me in temptations beyond my strength, or bound me to persons or things or employments

which were hindrances to my salvation by standing in the way of my praising and honouring and doing the Will of my God! Then it will be too late: the evil will have been done: no time then to undo all the mischief which has accrued to myself or others by an unfortunate choice, a choice made without the blessing of God;—a choice made more with a view to the things of this life and this world than to the things of the world to come and life everlasting after death. What shall I wish to have done,—what choice to have made,—when I am dying?

2nd Point.—"What shall I wish to have done when I am being judged, standing before the judgment-seat of Jesus Christ?" Jesus Christ is wise,—supremely wise: He will judge me and His judgment is right; and as He judges in that awful day, I shall see how I ought to have judged and what choice I ought to have made now. The enemy will be on one side, eager to prove how unwisely I judged and chose: eager to prove how I chose the creature before the Creator: how I refused what I ought to have chosen, because I thought it inconvenient or troublesome or humiliating: and how I chose what was bad, because it seemed to promise pleasure or gain, or flattered my vanity or advanced my interest or gave me influence or won for me notoriety. Then I shall see how far wiser it would have been to have made Jesus Christ, my pattern: to have chosen as He would have chosen: to have had God always before me and to have realized His presence and to have chosen as I would have done, had I actually seen Jesus Christ looking at me and seeing how I made my choice.

To hear my accuser say that on such and such an occasion I had chosen to follow a whim or satisfy my anger or gratify my passion, or through wounded pride, or to gain approbation or to attract admiration, or through vanity, and therefore that I had chosen even to do wrong or not to do right, or had chosen, between two things, that which was less to the glory of God,—and to be conscious that the charge is true and to be dumb and unable to say a word in my defence—would it not be madness for me to expose myself to such dismay at that day when my lot for eternity is to be decided? O safe and secure rule of choice—what shall I wish to have chosen when I stand before the judgment-seat of Christ?

3rd Point.—"What advice should I give another situated like myself?" I am prepossessed in my own case: I am blinded by interest and the power of creatures and the influence of the present: reason cannot act freely when my senses and my feelings are being acted on by the circumstances which surround me: but were another in my position, I could judge and choose more calmly and without prejudice. What counsel then would I give to another in the matter where I have to choose for myself? If I really wished his good, really wished his salvation, really wished him to fulfil the end of his creation and to secure his soul in peace, I should advise him not to allow himself to be carried away by the pleasures or advantages of the present moment, but to exercise prudence and look to the future: not to be carried away by creatures present but to remember the presence, though invisible, of

their Creator: to prefer eternity to time and future undying good to that which can last, at most, only a few years. What counsel would I give my brother? would I not urge on him the rules already given. Think what you would wish to have done when you come to die: and, think what you would wish to have done when you stand before Jesus Christ, to be judged.

Our Father.

SIXTH DAY.—IV. (*b*)

HOW JESUS TREATED SINNERS.

All need a change if they have turned aside from the end for which God created them. If they have preferred the Creature to their Creator, they must turn again to their Creator.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—Mary Magdalen struck with remorse at her own misery when she witnesses the beauty of holiness in the Person and Words of our Blessed Lord, washes His Feet with her tears and is restored to grace.

2*nd Preamble.*—The room: the guests: the Pharisee: Mary at the Feet of Jesus.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord, that I may understand the manner in which Jesus Christ Thy Son treated Mary Magdalen and that I may love Him and follow His example.

1*st Point.—The Persons.* Jesus, infinite Purity: Mary Magdalen immersed in sin. The noblest gift of God, the power of loving, she had perverted and directed not to God but to creatures: for the love of creatures she had given up all and had received the fitting reward, degradation, contempt, and bondage to the evil one. She was an outcast: the very men who took advantage of her, despised her and called her by names of ignominy. She drank down iniquity like water, and beautiful exteriorly was a miserable wreck, a mass of putrid corruption within. Her life was one of riot and when riot was over, of disgust. She was living the few years assigned her for preparing for everlasting life, as though there were no life to win, no Hell to shun. Beauty which is a ray from the supreme loveliness of God, she abused to the dishonour of God and the ruin of men and of her own soul. She was, eminently, a sinner; was known as such, was notorious as such: and lived and battened on sin. She was in the heyday of her abandoned dissoluteness, when her eye lighted upon Jesus and her ears caught His voice and words. She saw Him the Prophet, the Preacher, the Reformer: and she had expected to see in Him only another scribe or pharisee, one that would treat her with contempt and despise her for her sinfulness. But when the eye of Jesus met hers, there was no contempt in it: she saw it beaming on her with unutterable compassion and with most winning love—with love how different from that to which she had been used—with love a thousand times intenser than the love of passion but chaste as driven snow. There was

no Pharisaic superciliousness in that look of Jesus: it touched the good chord in the heart of Mary and she melted into the penitent.

2nd Point.—The Pharisee was a respectable man. He kept good company and was never seen familiar with persons of bad repute or doubtful character. He was clear of open sin: nay! our Lord's words, likening him to the small debtor, imply that really he was a servant of God and that his debt to the Divine justice was comparatively small: his was the debt of 50 denarii contrasted with 500. He showed some regard for our Blessed Lord and some generosity too, for while so many of his fellows persecuted our Lord and sought His death, he had the courage to entertain Him and receive Him at his table. His example might be proposed for imitation, but he was out-done by the Penitent, and he has so suffered by contrast with her that his good points have been forgotten and he has only received the character of pride and superciliousness. But the manner of Jesus Christ to him is not unkind: there is remonstrance but there is great gentleness mixed with it. Jesus would save both Mary and the Pharisee: He loved them both, but the penitent's love was greater, and He took her part and made a Saint of her.

3rd Point.—As Jesus treated penitents so must we, His servants, and we must take heed not to treat them as the Pharisee did. If we do, we may well fear that Jesus Christ may remonstrate with us as He did with him. If we have now given up mortal sin and avoid heinous crime, still the awakened sinner may be fervent while we are lukewarm

and may be ready to make great sacrifices while we refuse to make any: at best we may invite Jesus Christ to a meal, while the penitent may renounce all his ill-won goods, reduce himself to poverty and pour the precious ointment on the feet of Jesus. How far more generous is the penitent often than the Priest, how ashamed of ourselves may we often be when we compare our listlessness with the fervour and sacrifices of those whom we may have been instrumental in converting. And again how unwise to despair of any, as though they were too bad for conversion: why! they may be future Saints, far, far above us if we come to Heaven. In one more point our Blessed Lord would seem to set us an example here; in prudence. It is in the presence of others that He permits the approach and the devotion of Magdalen. And we must avoid scandal and not give unnecessary occasion for calumny or evil surmises.

Colloquy. — O Jesus Christ, my Master and Exemplar, give me an ardent desire for Thy glory and a great thirst for souls: the greater the sinner the more may I pity him, pray for him, and strive to win him. May I feel that it is only too possible that while his conversion may show itself in burning love, I may fail to persevere. Mingle my zeal with humility but fill my heart with zeal.

Our Father.

SEVENTH DAY.—I.

THE PARTING SUPPER.

Since we have made up our minds that there is nothing better than to be like Jesus Christ, to choose what He chose, to suffer as He suffered, let us in contemplating the Passion see in fact what He did suffer, that, whatever evil may betide us, we may gather strength to bear it peacefully as making us more like Him.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* Christ our Lord sent two of His disciples from Bethany to Jerusalem to prepare the Paschal supper: He came thither with the other disciples: after He had eaten the Paschal Lamb and supped, He washed their feet and gave His Most Holy Body and His Precious Blood to His disciples: and He made a discourse to them after Judas had gone forth to sell his Lord.

2nd Preamble.—Picture to yourself the places: the road from Bethany to Jerusalem, whether broad or narrow or level, &c.; then the Supper-room whether spacious or small, of this or that form.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, pain, affliction and confusion:—because my Lord on account of my sins is on His way to His Passion.

1st Point.—The agony of suspense. There is Mary at Bethany, two miles east of Jerusalem over Mount Olivet: she heard two days ago that her Son was at this Pasch to be betrayed and crucified: Oh, the agony of suspense; she has indeed experienced this more or less ever since Simeon's Prophecy and now it is culminating. What is going to happen? He, her own Jesus is going to be betrayed! He—is going—to be crucified. Oh, the agony of the interval: Oh, the agony of expectation: who will betray Him? will he not compassionate the meek and tender Lamb that never did harm to any but only went about doing good? And Jesus suffers too the Agony of expectation: and all the more because He can trace beforehand each step of pain and dereliction and torture, till the moment that He gives up the ghost. And the Apostles in a less degree suffer the agony of suspense. Something is hanging over them and their Master. He has spoken of betrayal and crucifixion: they cannot realize this; they cannot realize their gracious Master gibbeted like a common felon and hoisted up between earth and heaven, with nails driven through those Hands which have been laid on the

sick and blind to heal, and those Feet which have carried Him on errands of mercy.

And Jesus could, had He liked, have put an end to all this and foregone His Passion. He had indeed offered Himself for it, but when He sees the ingratitude which He is to meet with, would it seem worth while to suffer so much? Why shall He not decline it and manifest at once His Almighty Power to the overthrow of His enemies? Yet He will not, and for my sake He will not: therefore, for His sake, I will accept suffering of whatever kind: the suffering of suspense, if it should please God to send it to me, I will bear patiently because Jesus Christ bore it. I will accept it not merely because my past grievous sins have merited worse; nor merely because my daily faults deserve it, but simply because Jesus Christ chose to undergo it; and out of love for Him, I desire to become like Him: to suffer as He did. If then I anticipate unkindness from a friend: or some terrible blow in the death of a friend or in the loss of property, &c.—Thy Will, O God, be done! Blessed be Thou for giving me the opportunity of becoming like Jesus Christ.

2nd Point.—The agony of false friends. Judas had once been good: for him a throne had been destined in Heaven: he had begun with fervour the life of a companion of Jesus Christ: he had been friendly with Mary and Peter and John and had been one of a pair who had preached and worked miracles in the Name of Jesus. And he became tired of a life of poverty: he found that poverty brought humiliations, and as His Master was despised so too he and his companions were

despised by his countrymen. Poverty and humiliations, if rightly borne, produce Humility, but they may also produce discontent and lead men to have recourse to unlawful ways to get rid of them. Judas was discontented: he became moody, envious, carping, and resolves to betray the Master, Whom he has begun to regard as his worst enemy as having led him into a vagrant, mendicant life. And Jesus reads his heart and is cut to the quick by his ingratitude and by the misery that he is laying up for himself for eternity. See Jesus doing all He can to melt his heart: He places Himself at his feet and washes them: He looks in his face and warns him by that look: but the traitor quailing beneath that look of expostulation only seeks the more anxiously the opportunity of getting away to consummate his villainy. All remonstrance then is in vain, and at last Jesus lets him go. What thou doest, do quickly: He gives him an excuse for going out, while He still forbears to publish his guilt, if perchance, when alone and on the way, he may repent and turn. Jesus lets the conspiracy against His life go on: He might have arrested all at a moment's notice, He Who raised the dead might have let Judas die. But He will persevere in His gracious intention to suffer, to the end—for my sake: to prevail on me to suffer patiently, and bear with the unkindness of false friends and the ingratitude of those whom I have benefited. Therefore, O my God, if all my kindnesses to another are forgotten; if my oldest friends become cool and unfriendly: if relations turn against me and those for whom I have made sacrifices requite all my love with indiffer

ence—while I will grieve from the bottom of my heart for their sin and the danger they incur for eternity—I will be glad for myself that I am to be treated as Jesus Christ was treated, and that, so far, I am made like Him. I will bear it all not merely as a penance for my own past grievous sins of ingratitude to God or to my fellow-creatures, though I have indeed deserved it; not merely in satisfaction for the many occasions on which I still show want of sense of the kindness of others and of God's daily blessings; but simply because whatever makes me like Jesus Christ must be good for me and an unspeakable blessing.

Colloquy.—O Jesus Christ, suffering for me the Agony of suspense and the ingratitude and unkindness of those who owed Thee every good they possessed or hoped for, give me at least patience in suffering as Thou didst suffer: give me comfort, nay, even joy in tribulation: and if I have not the courage to offer myself to suffer, send me sufferings however my nature may shrink from them: if only Thou also give me grace to bear them thankfully.

Soul of Christ, p. 32.

Our Father.

SEVENTH DAY.—II.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

Dismay, terror and horror at calamity impending and certain: desolation at abandonment by friends: helplessness in the hands of enemies; are temporal evils which are hardly likely to fall to the lot of ordinary Christians, but Jesus Christ our Master submitted to them willingly in order that we might be encouraged under our lesser trials and be ready even for the greatest: for the greater they are, the more full of blessing are they, as making us more like Christ,—more humble.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord my God, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* Christ our Lord goes down with His eleven disciples from Mount Sion where He had supped, towards and into the Valley of Josaphat: ascending the slope of Olivet, He leaves eight of them in a part of the Valley and

the other three in a part of the Garden: then retired and alone, putting Himself in prayer, He sweats as though drops of blood: then He prayed thrice to His Father and thrice waked from sleep His disciples: then His enemies fell prostrate at His voice, while Judas kisses Him, and Peter cuts off Malchus' ear (which Christ at once restored to its place): He is arrested as a felon; they drag Him downwards to the Valley, then upwards on its other side to the house of Annas.

2nd Preamble.—Picture to yourself the road from Mount Sion to the Valley of Josaphat and imagine too the Garden: the size, the position. &c.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, sorrow that I may grieve with Jesus Christ suffering: a bruised spirit with Jesus crushed and bruised: tears and interior pain for so great pain, endured by Christ for me.

1st Point.—Dismay and terror. Were we at sea and the ship were breaking up and the pitiless wind raging and the mountains of water dashing on us and destruction certain, what dismay would seize the passengers. Jesus Christ saw the storm thickening and the Crucifixion nearing and the absolute certainty of the agony of death before four-and-twenty hours were over. See Him suffering, prostrate on the ground: no consolation on any side. If after praying to His Father, Who seems not to hear Him, He has recourse to His friends for sympathy, He finds them sleeping, not able to enter into His sorrows. No sympathy, no consolation: Dismay, unalleviated dismay! Does He despair?

Oh no! God forbid! He prays the more. He finds no help from men: He seems to find no help from His Father, but He knows His Father and He returns to petition Him: and when He is at the worst, sweating blood in His Agony, the Father sends an Angel, not to take away the suffering but to strengthen Him to bear it. And when trouble threatens me, even in the comparatively trifling way which I may expect, let me accept the suffering of anticipation. If God will have me suffer: if it is inevitable, I am allowed to share one of Jesus' sufferings: it will make me like Him: I will be patient even in the midst of fear. The evil draws near—the death of a friend: some serious loss: a blow to my reputation (unmerited by me): some surgical operation: nay! even the fear of confession —or of making my confession to a stranger: great difficulties, little difficulties:—I will not try to avoid them: I will have recourse to God; I will pray: and to be the more like Jesus Christ, I will use His very words, *Father, not my will, but Thine be done. If it be possible let this chalice pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou:* and if God seem not to hear, I will seek a friend and ask counsel and sympathy. If I find none, again I am more like Jesus Christ, who found His disciples asleep, even the Three whom He had most favoured. Failing here, again I will have recourse to God, "saying the same words:" unconsoled, I will seek my friends again and shall fail again and then I go back to God, and I declare my trouble and I strive with Him and my efforts grow stronger, like those of Jesus,—only He sweat blood—and God will be

gracious and visit me by my Guardian Angel and not leave me desolate. He will come to me and strengthen me. If I am like Jesus in His persevering supplication, I shall be like Him in the comforts which He received: and when I go back to my friends, I shall be able to do without them: be able to say to them: Sleep on now and take your rest: and when the traitor does come, I shall be able to assume the office of encourager and take my friends' part and show compassion on my enemies as Jesus did to Malchus.

2nd Point.—Left helpless in the hands of enemies. All the friends of Jesus fled. They had made great protestations, and now they take flight and Jesus the meek Lamb is left in the hands of His enemies. See how they lay violent hands on Him, the more spitefully as they had been smitten to the ground and now find themselves free from the so-called "magician's" power. Rough menials: instruments fitted for brutal assault: unfeeling ministers of unscrupulous employers and instigated by all the malice and hatred of the Evil spirits who had been forced to obey the power of Jesus and whose hour, the hour of darkness and the hour of evil, was now come. Jesus is at their mercy, and to be at the mercy of such, what does it mean? No brutal insult omitted: blows and cuffs and dragging and pushing and knocking about the head; and pinching and plucking off the hair and binding with cruel tightness: and smiting on the face and on every feature: hitting with the staves and the chains and the cords: whatever malice could invent, the Lamb of God suffers from them and He is alone, helpless,

abandoned: no friend to speak a word of sympathy: under the clear, chill full moon of the Pasch, the powers of evil are let loose against Jesus Christ.

And when am I likely to be called to suffer like this? And He suffered when at a moment He could have summoned Angels to His aid: when He could have smitten His persecutors with blindness, turned their violence against each other, or annihilated them. For my sake He suffered: for His sake may I suffer my little trials, when friends fail to help me and leave me alone in my trouble: when enemies attack me and do not spare me: if I am ever so placed as to be left at the mercy of rude officials or menials: if I am treated with rudeness and slighted by those who are my inferiors: Oh, how trifling is all this compared with what Jesus suffered and therefore with what I ought to be glad to suffer, in order to be like Him. But I resent more these trifles than if they were greater. It would be worth while to be imprisoned, to be martyred for Jesus Christ! Self-deception! if I am not faithful in the less, I should not be in the greater: for I can be faithful in neither one nor the other without the grace of God and if I refuse to use that grace to bear the easier what right have I to expect help to bear the harder?

Colloquy.—O Jesus Christ, Who didst suffer dismay and abandonment of all human consolations for me, help me to bear the same for Thee: I dare not ask for dismay and such abandonment, but deal with me in Thy wisdom: make me more and more like Thee and send me such trials as will make me like Thee, if only Thou give me also the necessary

grace to bear them: then I will accept them not merely as penance for my past grievous sins: or in satisfaction for my daily faults, but as painful but great blessings, because they make me more like Thee.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

Our Father.

SEVENTH DAY.—III.

FROM GETHSEMANI TO HEROD.

Dwell more and more on what Jesus Christ suffered, voluntarily suffered, suffered for me—and remember that He is God the Son—and since I would save my soul, and I must, to save my soul, be like Him, let me be ashamed that the sufferings which I am likely to be exposed to or which I actually endure, are such trifles compared with His, so that I have such a small chance of becoming very like Him. Meanwhile let me make the most of the comparatively trifling sufferings that fall to my lot, for it is by bearing them patiently that I shall be like Him and be humble.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.*—Jesus Christ is dragged from Gethsemani across the Valley and the Brook Cedron through the East Gate of Jerusalem to the house of Annas—thence to Caiphas—and

confined all night—then called again before Caiphas and sent to Pilate, who transfers Him to Herod, and Herod after mocking Him as a fool sends Him back to Pilate.

2nd Preamble.—Picture to yourself the path from Gethsemani: the valley: the Gate of Jerusalem: the streets: the houses of Annas, Caiphas, Pilate, Herod.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, sorrow that I may grieve with Christ suffering; a bruised spirit with Jesus crushed and bruised: tears and interior pain for so great pain endured by Christ for me.

1st Point.—Jesus Christ suffers from His own people, from those who owe Him everything even to the very strength which they exercise in showing Him violence. Annas had been His own Priest and time after time had offered the Paschal Lamb which was a figure of Christ Himself: Caiphas was now His own Priest and thought it an honour to be the mediator between Him, for He is God, the God of Israel, and the chosen people; and Caiphas owes all the honour he has to his being a representative of the one Priest after the Order of Melchisedech, the Man Jesus Christ, who stands in bonds before him: Pilate and Herod are the creatures of His Hand, and were He for a moment to suspend His Providential care over them, they would fall into nothing: and the mob is made up of those whom He created and who moreover have heard His gracious words and witnessed His healing power and seen His miracles. And now all are leagued against Him, egged on by the malice of Lucifer and their own envy. They

treat Him as though He would escape if He could and as though they could prevent Him. They bind Him fast; they drag Him as though He would not go; they shut Him up all night in the dark as though He would try to get away. And He moves as they would move Him, as though they were the strong and He the weak. And in an instant the whole picture might be reversed had He willed it: He might have stretched out His Arm and driven them to confusion. But for my sake, He persevered in suffering, that I by becoming a little like Him in the endurance of suffering might be humble and save my soul.

Henceforth then if parents treat me ill or prefer others before me as Barabbas was preferred to Jesus: if my Superiors misjudge me as Christ's judges misjudged Him: if I am misrepresented as a blasphemer as Jesus was by Caiphas: if my rivals exult over me as Annas did over the detected Impostor: if my own people and those I have benefited prove thankless, smite me on the cheek, calumniate me, bear false witness against me: Oh, how happy I should count myself—and, while I grieve for their sins, how grateful should I be that I am made a little more like Jesus Christ. And all these who thus ungratefully maltreat me, are in fact among my greatest benefactors, because they are instrumental in making me more like Jesus Christ.

2nd Point.—In particular, Pilate, who knew that out of envy He was accused and who knew He was innocent and said so, at last gives Him up. He who ought to have been the refuge of the innocent, first out of fear of Cæsar, scourges, then crucifies

the Innocent. And Jesus Christ puts up with this unworthy treatment: allows Barabbas to be preferred and Himself to be counted worse than a seditious murderer: and yet one act of His Will had deposed Pilate and placed him at the bar as the culprit; and He bears it for my sake. And I may sometimes be *victimized* as Jesus was. To save himself another may make me the scape-goat: and I wholly innocent in the case may be set down for the guilty one and a hypocrite to boot. Hard to bear, but capable of being turned to benediction: for if I bear it meekly, it will make me more like Jesus Christ: make me humbler: make my salvation more secure: and the persons who thus betray me—shall I wish them ill? Shall I look on them as my enemies? In fact I cannot wish them more ill than lies upon them, for they are—whatever men may think—*under God's wrath* and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God: and as to regarding them as enemies, are they not, unwittingly indeed, the ministers of good to me and to be numbered amongst my greatest benefactors, since they are helping to make me more like Jesus Christ—more humble—more secure of my salvation?

Colloquy.—Jesus Master, have mercy on me, and bless all those who do me wrong: they know not what they do: they neither know the good they are doing me nor the harm they are doing to their own souls: win them too to Thyself and make me grow like Thee in the love of sufferings and crosses and humiliations.

Soul of Christ, &c., p. 32.

Our Father.

SEVENTH DAY.—IV.

THE SCOURGING, CROWNING, CRUCIFYING.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—*The History.* Pilate has Jesus scourged and then shows Him to the people, who clamour for Barabbas and will have Jesus crucified. So Pilate condemns Him to the Cross, and the soldiers ridicule Him as a mock king and lead Him forth to Calvary, carrying His Cross.

2*nd Preamble.*—Picture to yourself Pilate's Prætorium: the Pillar of the Scourging—the gallery of the *Ecce Homo*—the Tribunal—the Soldier's Hall—the way to Calvary—the Hill—the receptacle of the corpses of felons.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant me, O Lord, sorrow with Jesus full of sorrow, a bruised spirit with Jesus crushed and bruised, tears and interior pain for so much pain endured by Christ for me.

1*st Point.—Jesus scourged.* Dwell on the physical *pain* borne by Jesus Christ in His Passion. The lash upon the naked flesh stings even when applied comparatively gently: what is the smart when it is laid on in earnest by a strong hand, by the hand of an executioner who takes delight in giving the utmost pain he can, or who, though he might be unwilling to pain, is bound and obliged to do his worst by officials standing by: and the scourgers were Roman soldiers, and the scourging was commanded by Roman Law, and even Pilate was willing that it should be excessive, from the lingering hope he had that this might satisfy the spite of the enemies of Jesus. Blood is fetched at the first blow, and then blow upon blow tears the virginal Flesh of Jesus and rends it off in shreds: and there is no mercy: each blow harder than the last and cutting deeper through the flesh down to the bone. And in one second Jesus could have said, It is enough! and He could have healed His own wounds as He healed Malchus: but He is athirst for suffering for my sake, and will bear anything if only He can persuade me to love Him. It is strange there should be any difficulty in this: who can help loving Jesus Christ? And how few love Him! But I will try and make up for the listlessness of others and make all the reparation I can to His Sacred Loving Heart. And my love shall not be in words only: when I suffer, I will suffer patiently for His sake and be glad to suffer because it makes me like Him. And if I am a coward and do not seek pain, yet, O my God, if only Thou give me grace to bear it, send me suffering and pain, that I may be more like Thy Son: I will

suffer patiently and willingly, not merely in penance for my past grievous sins: not merely in satisfaction for my daily faults: but most of all because sufferings meekly borne make me like Christ and make me humble.

2nd Point.—Crowning with thorns. Who can stand *ridicule?* who can stand being laughed at? of all indignities is not this hardest to bear? Look at Jesus Christ. He has been asked and He has answered that He is a King. And now that He is condemned like a thief and murderer, His claim to be a King is turned into ridicule. See the soldiers dress Him up as a mock king: an old piece of scarlet drugget for His Purple Robe: a stick for His sceptre, and for His crown, thorns plaited into a circle: then they snatch His sceptre from Him and drive with it the thorns into His temples: and they pay Him mock reverence;—Hail, King of the Jews! and they beat Him about the head and face, and pluck His beard and spit on Him. Is not His patience tired out? if He has acknowledged His sovereignty, will He not make good His words? He can with the word, *Peace be still*, silence and stun into submission men as easily as He once silenced the wind and storm: but He thought of men and of mankind whom He came to save and He went on suffering. Therefore if I wish to be like Him, it is useful for me to be treated unceremoniously; to be considered less than I should be; to be an object of amusement for men around me; to be laughed at; to be ridiculed. Oh, how hard! how impossible! yes! hard and impossible just in proportion as I am less desirous of becoming like Jesus Christ and

growing humble. "But I cannot bear this;—anything but this!" and therefore ask God to give you grace proportioned to the trial before you ask Him to admit you to the superhuman privilege of being made—without any fault of yours—a laughing-stock: a butt for men to jeer at. Doubtless you cannot bear much of this: but the little that God gives you grace to bear will go far towards making you humble and like Jesus Christ. Only do not spoil all, by pluming yourself interiorly on your heroism: confess that you have *deserved* such ridicule and worse, for your past grievous sins: that your daily littlenesses, unknown to men, deserve it too: and then you will be safe in uniting yourself derided, with Jesus Christ, mocked and derided.

3rd Point.—The Crucifixion. Bitter *disappointment.* See Jesus Christ Who came to establish a Kingdom upon earth of which He was to be the Spiritual Head and King, ending His Life on a gibbet. Three years He has been preaching, doing good, working wonders, collecting disciples, instructing Apostles: and He is just winning a reputation. His fame has spread through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Perea, Syria; and Hellenistic Jews have asked to be introduced to Him and all seems prospering. Just lately the wonderful resuscitation of Lazarus has made the greatest noise, and the multitude of Jews who thronged to Jerusalem at the Pasch witnessed His triumphal entrance across the Valley of the Cedron last Sunday,—crowded as the Valley was with the tents of those who could find no room in the city during the feast. Day after day He has passed to and fro from Bethany in the midst of them, and

they have heard Him daily in the Temple, and seen Him heal there miraculously: the multitudes recognized Him as a Prophet, and the Scribes and Pharisees were in fear: all the people came early to Him in the Temple to hear Him.

What better prospect could there be of success in founding the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and establishing the Christian Church in perpetuity? And in one moment the whole fabric seems overthrown. The decree is gone forth: the time is come: His enemies will make another effort and they are to succeed: the King of Palm Sunday is to be the Crucified felon of Good Friday, and all that remains of royalty is to be the superscription: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. But had He liked, He could have baffled the Jewish leaders: in a moment He could have overthrown them. But for my sake, to show how He loved me even to death,—to die for me—He let His enemies prevail.

And let my favourite schemes be disappointed and my hopes be baffled when it is to Thy greater glory, O my God. Whenever any proposal I have made is thwarted, I have an opportunity of being like Christ, of becoming humble: and those who thwart me, are they my enemies? They really are the occasions of great good to me. They may be wrong or they may be right, that is their affair: but wherever God allows them to disappoint me, they contribute to do me good—to supply me with an occasion of resignation, such as—though how unlike in *degree*—Jesus Christ put up with, and if I take the disappointment meekly, I grow like Jesus

Christ and increase in humility—and the salvation of my soul is more secure.

Colloquy.—O my Lord Jesus Christ, not my will but Thine be done! Give me disappointments, if only Thou give me grace to bear them as Thou didst the thwartings which crossed Thy gracious dealings with men; then disappointments shall nurture in me Humility and secure my salvation.

Soul of Christ, do Thou sanctify my soul:
Body of Christ, Thy Virtue make me whole:
And Blood of Christ, my passions' thirst control.

Cleanse, Water from Christ's Side, my heart from stain:
Passion of Christ, support me in my pain:
Let me not call on Thee, dear Lord, in vain.

Within Thy Sacred Wounds, Thy servant hide:
Let nothing ever part me from Thy Side:
Defend me from the foe's malignant pride.

Call me what time my passing bell shall toll:
And bid me with Thy Saints reach Thee, my goal,
To praise Thee while for aye the ages roll. Amen.

Our Father.

EIGHTH DAY.—I.

THE RESURRECTION.

First Apparition.

If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him: in proportion to the degree in which we have shared His toils and sufferings, we shall partake in the joys of His Victory. Let us see now how some of His soldiers have been rewarded and we shall be able to judge of what is in store for us.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* After Jesus Christ had expired on the Cross and while His Body remained separated from His Soul though His Divine Person continued united to it, His Blessed Soul likewise united with His Divine Person went down to Hell: and then, after delivering thence the holy souls and returning to the Sepulchre and rising

again, He appeared in Body and Soul to His Blessed Mother.

2nd Preamble.—Picture to yourself the position and arrangement of the Holy Sepulchre and the house or place where our Lady was staying and its various parts: the spot where she prayed, where she reposed, &c.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, my desire—grace to rejoice and be glad intensely for such great glory and gladness of Christ our Lord.

1st Point.—The Persons in Hades, the Holy Souls, their words and actions. Think over the Holy Patriarchs who were there from our first parents down to St. Joseph and St. John the Baptist, as well as the Penitent Thief who accompanied our Lord. Think of the Prophets and Martyrs and Confessors and Holy Women who were all expecting their redemption: think of the many whose Purgatory was over and who were now waiting patiently for the coming of their Saviour. The arrival among them of Daniel, Malachias, Joachim, Joseph, and John the Baptist had raised their expectations to the highest pitch and now on a sudden the gates of Hell are thrown open and the glorious Soul of Jesus Christ appears. He is out of reach of Scribe and Pharisee; Roman Governor and Royal Tetrarch can reach Him no longer; His Body is hanging on the Cross bruised and battered and defiled with Blood and spittle, but the Soul of the Lord is free and happy and glorious: and at once Hell is changed to Paradise. Listen to the congratulations and the acclamations of the holy expectants, and

His gracious and loving benedictions. And now just in proportion as these Holy Souls shared the toils and labours and sufferings of Christ by anticipation on earth, do they now enjoy His triumph: some had been racked for Justice' sake or held up to mockery and derision, or bound in prison or stoned or cut to pieces, or sawn asunder or wandered in banishment or driven to find refuge in caverns of the earth:—others had taught the Law of God, patiently instructing the ignorant, ministering to the sick, relieving the poor and comforting the afflicted —some in one way, some in another, some more, some less, had been faithful followers, by anticipation, of the pattern of Jesus Christ, served under His Standard and persevered to the end. They had forborne to resent injuries: they had borne with insults and derision and contempt, and taken delight in them because they had thereby been helped to humility:—and now they find it worth while to have renounced the flesh and the world and to have put on the livery of Christ. And the first sight of Jesus in His glory repays them for all that they had suffered for Him, and their joy is to last for ever. Mark too the endearing familiarity of Jesus Christ, Who consoles each and all as one friend speaks consolingly to another: and the brightness of His Divine Person manifests itself and guarantees the eternity of the reward.

2nd Point.—And Jesus leads the Holy Souls to His Sepulchre and after reuniting His Sacred Body and Soul, takes the happy troop to where His Mother was staying. Mary had spent the hours since the Burying in solitude, silence, and longing

expectation: she knew He was to rise again and on the third day: and the third day's beginning was close at hand. Her Son makes no delay: He hastens to bring peace and joy to His dear Mother's heart and, having prepared her soul to bear the intensity of joy, He stands revealed before her. What she felt what tongue can tell? for if the future joy of the faithful soldiers of Christ is proportioned to the degree of their likeness to Him while on earth and the share they have had in His toils and labours and sufferings, then Mary's joy was as far above our comprehension as is her resemblance to her Son and her compassion with His Passion. Think of the first sight that she had of Him, glorious and risen! Winter is gone and the glory of spring flushes upon her soul; how she looked on Him Whom she had nursed and lulled to sleep in her lap: Whom she had lived with for thirty years and more, sharing in all His cares and labours: Whom she had accompanied on His journeys and Whom she had gazed on in His Passion and hanging on the Cross: how she gazed on that forehead now glorious, which she had last seen pierced with the Crown of Thorns: and all the ignominy is changed into glory and she is partaker of His glory: how she gazed on the Hands, out of which she had seen the iron nails drawn; then they were helpless to save and now, while they still bear the marks of the nails, they are mighty to save and wield omnipotence: how she gazed on those Eyes of Jesus which she had last looked on glazed with death and now beaming on her own with divine charity! And after all, all the

joy she feels is but a foretaste of that which is in store for her when mortality shall put on immortality and she herself shall be, in body and in soul, glorious after the pattern of her Son. Is it not then worth while for her to have enlisted under the Standard of Jesus? to have loved Poverty of spirit and actual poverty, to have been despised and rejected by men as her Son was: to have had all her natural greatness ignored and to have been overlooked and not thought of by the rich matrons of Judea and Jerusalem? Who would exchange Mary's condition for that of Herodias or Berenice? Is it not true wisdom to treat as trifles both the good things and the evil of this world, to regard them as indifferent, except so far as they help to make us more like Jesus Christ in His earthly life and make us more fully sharers in His Victory?

Colloquy.—

O Queen of Heaven, sing with gladness, Alleluia!

Thy Son hath changed to joy thy sadness, Alleluia!

As He promised, Christ is risen, Alleluia!

Pray Mary then, to God for men, Alleluia!

Thine be joy and gladness, Virgin and Mother, Alleluia!

Truly the Lord is risen up from death, Alleluia!

Pray for us, dear Mother Mary, that we may indeed be made like thy Son on earth, and that by patiently suffering whatever may tend to make us more and more like Him, we may share in the happiness which thou dost possess now with Him in Heaven.

EIGHTH DAY.—II.

APPARITIONS TO ST. MARY MAGDALENE AND TO ST. PETER.

Jesus our Lord appears to the holy, whether they had always been so or had become so. And heart-felt contrition attracts Him, as in the cases of St. Mary Magdalene and St. Peter.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* Mary Magdalene and the other women repair to the Sepulchre to supply those deficiencies in respect due to the dead, which the shortness of time on Friday evening had rendered unavoidable. When the rest were gone, Mary still hovers about the grave and Jesus appears to her. The same morning too He appeared to St. Peter. "The Lord is risen in truth and has appeared to Peter."

2*nd Preamble.*—The Garden of the Sepulchre within sight of Calvary: the Tomb: the road.

3rd Preamble.—Grant me, O Lord, my desire: grace to rejoice and be glad intensely for such great gladness and joy of Christ our Lord.

1st Point.—Think of Mary Magdalene's anxiety: she is well-nigh crazed with perplexity. She had not the faith of Mary, our Lady, who fully expected the Resurrection of her Son: and Mary Magdalene thinks that some one must have stolen away the Body. But she loved and loved so much that when the other women had renounced their search as useless, she remains and looks again and again into the places which she had searched before. And she sought and she found. Jesus appears but disguised: the delight of her soul is present but not recognized. "Mary!"—"Rabboni!" The unrecognized presence is her Purgatory: when recognized it is her Paradise: and she would give herself wholly up to ecstasy; but she has to win still higher joy in Heaven, and Jesus commissions her to do His Will in publishing His Resurrection.

Mary enters into the joy of her Lord: she has a large share in the Victory: this must be because she had a large share in the toils and labours of her Master: and in what did she eminently resemble Him? Of course she had shared His toils in accompanying Him on His journeys: she had with Lazarus and Martha given Him hospitality: she had listened to His teaching: she had accompanied His Mother to the foot of the Cross and taken part in His Burial and in her Desolation. But in what did she especially resemble Jesus Christ? What suffering of His was reproduced in her more than

any other? It was—the Heart of Jesus broken at the sight of sin. She had sinned and she had repented and her sorrow and grief at sin were intense indeed. Such was the intensity of Jesus' suffering at the sight of sin and sinners, of its malice and their impenitence and ingratitude, that it covered Him with desolation on the Cross—*Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani?*—and actually broke His Heart, for, when it was pierced, there flowed out Blood and Water. So Mary Magdalene shared in the pain that Jesus suffered at sin:—deepest sorrow, contrition, sadness: and because she shared in this suffering so intensely and felt that no contempt, no pain, no scorn and derision, by whomsoever heaped upon her, could atone for her past sins: that *nothing could be too bad for her:* therefore in the Resurrection she had so lavish a share of joy. Therefore let us rejoice when in this world we are despised, made little of, superciliously treated, unnoticed by those whom once we benefited and who now perhaps need our patronage no more, but would condescend to patronize us: let us feel we have deserved it all and more and worse, and kiss the rod and bear them no ill-will, for they are God's ministers of good, because of chastisement, to us, and in proportion to their insulting patronizingness or contempt, and our patience, we grow more like Jesus here and shall be rewarded by Him in His Kingdom.

2nd Point.—And St. Peter too. He shared with Magdalene in Contrition. He had acted the coward and denied the Visible Head of the Church, for such was, while visibly on earth, Jesus Christ. He had shaken like a reed at the detection to which he was

exposed at the question of a maid-servant. And he was full of shame and confusion and contrition. All his life long he mourned over his denial and so, grieved with his Master on account of sin: suffered with his Master at the sight of sin. He was, like Jesus Christ, heartbroken at the sight of sin and therefore, in the Resurrection, shared in the reward. He counted nothing too bad for himself, considering his past sin and ingratitude. And what esteem can we have of sin, if we can think any good of ourselves? if we think ourselves *capable* of being insulted? Why surely our sins have made us such reeking dunghills that nothing can happen to us on earth too bad for us. If the little children in the streets were to mock us and cover us with mud, do *we* not know, though those around us may think us Saints, that our past sins have entitled us to being mocked by the evil spirits in hell and to be covered by them with contumely and filth? How then can it be that we have profited by the Exercises, if when we re-enter the world and find persons treat us cavalierly, we bristle up at it and are troubled at it and return the slight, with pride and haughtiness and refusal to take any notice of them? If indeed I sympathize with Jesus in hatred and abhorrence of sin, I shall so hate and abhor my own past sins as to look on every one who despises me as doing me only justice; on every one who treats me with contumely and contempt, as one who is doing me a kindness, and preventing in the life to come a greater contempt from the evil spirits—God's ministers of punishment then—by inflicting on me a less contempt in this life. O Reality! who will

give me reality? to see things as God sees them? to feel with Jesus Christ, and those penitents who did indeed feel with Him, such as Peter, the Penitent Apostle, who now in reward for his self-abasement for his sin, is the first of the Apostolic band to see Jesus Christ risen and holds the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: Heaven will be locked to those who fail to sympathize with Jesus in His pain and sorrow at sin.

Colloquy.—O Mary Magdalene and St. Peter, patterns of penitents—win me grace so to be ashamed of my own sins, so to grieve for the sins by which the Heart of Jesus is grieved wherever men sin on earth, as to rejoice in humiliations here and in being admitted to peace with Jesus hereafter.

Our Father.

EIGHTH DAY.—III.

THE ASCENSION.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.—The History.* After our Lord had from time to time during forty days appeared to His Disciples, speaking to them of the Kingdom of God, He bade them await the coming of the Holy Ghost in Jerusalem. So He led them out to Mount Olivet and was taken up into Heaven; and Angels said to the Disciples: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into Heaven? this Jesus, Who has been taken up into Heaven, shall so come as ye have seen Him going into Heaven.

2*nd Preamble.*—Picture to yourself the mountain where were Gethsemani and the place of the Ascension: the path across and up to it: and Heaven, into which the Angels accompany our Lord.

3*rd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord, my desire: grace to rejoice and be glad intensely with Jesus ascending into Heaven.

1*st Point.*—The disciples on their way to Emmaus were conversing about Jesus Christ: in all the apparitions Jesus, our Lord, spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven: and this will suggest to us another point in which we must resemble Jesus Christ on earth, if we would share His triumph in Heaven. We must love to speak of Him and of His Kingdom. We cannot imagine our Blessed Lord speaking of anything without its having some bearing on man's salvation and the Glory of His Father. As we share His lodging and His food, so we take part in His favourite topics of conversations: it must be grateful to us to speak of the Kingdom of Heaven. We must not be ashamed of it. It would seem often that the children of God make a point of not speaking of God and His Kingdom: as though these topics had their proper time and place, in the confessional, for example; but that it is a forbidden topic elsewhere and so they must carefully eschew it and talk instead of the last novel, or the latest fashion or last night's debate or the state of the funds or the crops or the politics of Europe. Compare this with the life and habits of Jesus Christ and remember that we aim at being like Him. Of course we have not to refuse to speak on the topics of the day, but we ought to have a relish for those that regard the honour of God, and as recollection does not stand in always thinking of God but in the facility and readiness with which at a moment's notice we may recall the presence of God and rest in it; so in the matter of conversation, whatever be our topic, we ought to have a facility, and readiness and gladness, in directing it to the religious point of

view. What did Jesus Christ talk about? What is the topic of the conversation of the Saints in Heaven? We must habituate ourselves to enjoy the matters which give enjoyment to them, and earth is meant as the place of preparation: we must love always to speak as having Jesus Christ present and take delight in the things that pleased Him. And in proportion to our likeness to Him on earth is to be our share in His victory.

2nd Point.—The Mount of Olives was the Scene of the Agony and the Scene of the Ascension: as though we were to learn even at the last point of our Lord's sojourn upon earth that suffering now and victory hereafter are correlative. The more we resemble our Master in labours and sufferings, the greater our resemblance to Him in Heaven. As He stood ready to ascend, He could see the Garden of Olives and might point out where He knelt, where He sweat blood, where the Angel appeared to Him, where Judas kissed Him, where He was bound, where He fell under the ill-treatment of the soldiers,—and every reminiscence enhances the present victory: every humiliation is rewarded with corresponding glory. Injuries from enemies, injuries from friends, contempt, obloquy, ingratitude; physical pain and mental agony and desolation: every insult meekly borne: every derision patiently endured: every act of resignation and forgiveness of enemies, every apparent slight kindly interpreted or excused; every allowance made for the different points of view in which different persons view the same thing: every act of imitation of the Divine charity, now meets a reward a hundred-fold:

and once more and last of all: Christ fulfils his promise: Share with Me your Captain and fare as I do, labour by day and watch by night as I do: I will require no more from thee than thou seest in Me—far less: use the lodging, food, and all that I use: and you shall be sure of victory, and as to the fruits of the victory, in proportion to your generosity and self-sacrifice shall be your share for eternity. Do not flag: for he that shall persevere unto the End, he shall be saved and to those who follow Me there shall be even in this life a hundred-fold and in the life to come, life everlasting.

And at the close of the Exercises, listen to the Angels: and after gazing into Heaven, return to the work of God on earth and prepare for the second coming of Jesus Christ: Death comes to all and at death Christ comes to us.

Colloquy.—O Jesus, Master, Who ascendest to Thy glory and reward: make my heart like Thine in charity and self-conquest: give me perseverance in Thy holy service and since Thou hast begun a good work in me, perfect it till Thou come again and receive me to Thyself.

Soul of Christ, &c., p. 32.

Our Father.

EIGHTH DAY.—IV.

CONTEMPLATION TO OBTAIN THE LOVE OF GOD.

N.B. (1) Love stands more in deeds than in words; (2) Love stands in the mutual interchange of the goods that each possesses.

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this hour, the posture of my body, the exercise of my understanding, and the affections of my heart, may all be directed to the service and praise of Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Preamble.*—Picture to myself how I am standing in the presence of God our Lord, with the Angels and Saints interceding for me.

2*nd Preamble.*—Grant me, O Lord, an intimate knowledge of the good things I have received from Thee, so many and so great, that with the truest gratitude I may in all things love and serve Thy Divine Majesty.

1*st Point.*—The *gifts* of creation and redemption: how God has given me abundantly of the good

things He possesses and how He desires to give Himself to me: in return I ought to give myself and all I have to Him, saying, Do Thou take, O Lord, take and accept all I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my reason, my will; all that I own and possess: it was Thou that gavest them to me, to Thee I give them back: all are Thine, do with them as Thou wilt: only give, O Lord, to me Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

2nd Point.—God *is in* His creatures; in the elements, in plants, in animals, in man. He is then in all the gifts and good things He has given me and by His presence makes them what they are, gives them the qualities which benefit me. Not only then does He give me good things, but He gives me Himself with His gifts: therefore, in return, do Thou take, O Lord, take and accept all I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my reason, my will; all that I own and possess: it was Thou that gavest them to Me, to Thee I give them back: all are Thine, do with them as Thou wilt; only give, O Lord, to me Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

3rd Point.—God is not idle in His gifts: He Himself *works in* and through the gifts which He gives me—He does not, therefore, merely give me gifts: not merely gives Himself with His gifts, but gives Himself working for me in His gifts: how then should I not return all I have, all I am, all my energies to Him? Do Thou take, O Lord, take and accept all I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my reason, my will; all that I own and possess; it was Thou that gavest them to me, to Thee I give them back: all are Thine, do with them

as Thou wilt: only give, O Lord, to me Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

4th Point.—Not alone do the gifts which I have, come from God; but in Him is the perfection of everything that is good and every gift possessed by every creature in creation comes from Him as the ray from the sun or the stream from the fountain. Since then God is so entirely the one source of all good, and has in Himself that which imparts all goodness to whatever is good, let me, as part of His Creation, ascribe all praise and glory to Him, and use to His honour all I have and all I am. Do Thou take, O Lord, take and accept all I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my reason, my will; all that I own and possess: it was Thou that gavest them to me, to Thee I gave them back: all are Thine, do with them as Thou wilt: only give, O Lord, to me, Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

There is no creature on the face of the earth which may not be regarded by me as a means to my salvation, and therefore so far a gift of God in which He is, through which He acts in order to give the opportunity of serving and praising Him, namely, by my using the creature or behaving with regard to it in such a way as Jesus Christ would have acted: every one of these creatures is an opportunity of my becoming like Jesus Christ. Does something pleasant happen to me? It comes from some creature, and that creature is God's gift, fitted by His Presence to be a means of good to me: acting upon me through His active cooperation, so as to become an occasion to me of growing like

Jesus Christ, whether I ought to use the creature or deny myself its use, for this must be determined by the way in which Jesus Christ would have behaved with regard to it and I must become like Him by behaving with regard to it, as He would have behaved. Does something unpleasant happen to me? a loss, a pain, an insult, an accident, nay! a temptation? Let the same be said: it comes from some creature or other; and this creature is what it is with regard to me by God's Presence: and God is in it directing it in its relation to me in such a way as to make it an occasion to me of my becoming more like Jesus Christ; of my growing humble, of my salvation. And every hour of the day, every minute, something of this kind is happening to me: for I am always surrounded by creatures, and they are acting upon me, and I have to act with regard to them: and so every hour of the day, every minute, God is very near me, supplying me from morning to night with occasions, some painful, some pleasurable; some dangerous, some helpful; some from inanimate creatures, some from animate, some from men and women, some from good and some from evil spirits: and as He supplies me with the occasions He also gives me the pattern to follow in my dealing with the occasions, Jesus Christ, my Captain; and He is ever by my side with the Great Gift, His Grace and the Holy Ghost, so that I need not fail in any occasion, but may by every one be more and more like to Jesus Christ, and so by praising, revering, and doing the will of God, save my soul.

Colloquy.—Do Thou take, O Lord, take and

accept all that I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my understanding, and my will; all that I own and possess: it was Thou that gavest them to me, to Thee do I give them back; all are Thine, do with them as Thou wilt. Only give, O Lord, to me Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

Our Father.

CONCLUSION.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

We are ending our Retreat: are we to leave all the good and the good thoughts behind us, or is our Retreat to reform us for the ensuing year?

Preparatory Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that during this next year I may carry out the good thoughts that have occupied me during my Retreat, that I may use my body, my understanding and my will with the diligence with which I hope to use them during this my last meditation of the Retreat.

1*st Preamble.*—I stand before God; the Saints and Angels are interceding for me, and God bids me go forth and and love Jesus Christ, and I will keep His word.

2*nd Preamble.*—Grant, O Lord, that I may see Thy Love in all things, and by rendering Thee love for love, grow into the likeness of Thy Son.

1*st Point.*—Regard in everything that happens the Love of God. It may be difficult to realize it now, but when a few years are over, looking back

from eternity on this life we shall see that all that befell us was ordained for our good, or directed by God's Love for our discipline, to form us into the image of His Son. For indeed nothing can happen without God's Will, either His absolute Will or at least His permissive Will. Therefore regard everything as in some way, at least by His permission, coming from Him: and if so, it is all capable of being turned to our salvation. Be it that troubles assail us, and that from abundance we fall into destitution, lose position, property, friends, health —well! these are all sufferings and we have seen how sufferings can become blessings, whether we accept them patiently in penance for our sins or whether we regard them as characterising our Master, and so, when they happen to us, they will help to make us like Him on earth, and this we know is the guarantee of our being like Him in Heaven. It is hard for flesh and blood to bear such sufferings now: one almost gets impatient with those who do not suffer as we do when they exhort us to patience, but it is after all a fact, that they who a century ago suffered as we do, are now in their eternity and if they are saved they see how God intended suffering to their good: and a hundred years hence the same may be said of us.

2nd Point.—Look then on every five minutes henceforth as fraught with benefits from God. If it is merely *time*, well, time was a creature used by Jesus Christ and we, if we use it as He did, shall secure a happy eternity by it. Therefore time is a gift of God capable of bearing fruit to eternal life. If things go smoothly with us, it is a gift of God,

and if we use our peace and prosperity as Jesus Christ used the happy days at Nazareth and the successes of His public life, we shall share in His glory: and so prosperity is a gift of God, capable of being turned to everlasting life. If things go ill with us so far as the world goes: it is a gift of God more precious than the rest for it tends to Humiliations and therefore to Humility, and therefore tends to form Christ, the likeness of Christ, in us: and we know that Jesus suffered, that He chose suffering, how much He suffered and what the result was: if then we let sufferings—of whatever kind—physical pain—mortifying slights from friends—contempt—ill-treatment—calumny—whatever it may be,—if we let them have their proper effect upon us, they will shape us into Christ's likeness and shall we not, a hundred years hence, appreciate the fact that such sufferings were a precious gift of God and the best proofs of His love that He could give us? Therefore for all His gifts let us love God and say: Do Thou take, O Lord, take and accept all I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my understanding and my will; all that I own and possess: it was Thou that gavest them to me, to Thee do I give them back; all are Thine, do with them as Thou wilt. Only give, O Lord, to me Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

3rd Point.—Do not let us be ashamed of appearing changed by our Retreat: this can only come from Pride, as though we thought that we had nothing to correct, and Pride is opposed to that Humility which we have made so much of, and which alone can make us like Jesus Christ.

Colloquy.—O Lord Jesus Christ Thou hast taken much trouble with me to inform my understanding and draw to Thee my will: let not all Thy goodness be in vain. This Retreat is a gift of God, one where He is intimately present, where He acts upon the soul, where He gives Himself to me. Oh, may I give myself wholly and without reserve to God, my Lord and my Creator, to praise and revere and serve Him for ever. Do Thou take, O Lord, take and accept all I have in my power to dispose of, my memory, my understanding and my will; all that I own and possess: it was Thou that gavest them to me, to Thee do I give them back; all are Thine, do with them as Thou wilt. Only give, O Lord, to me Thy love and grace, and it is enough.

Our Father.

L. D. S.

By the Rev. A. J. Christie, S.J.

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